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Within the Precincts.

CHAPTER XIX.

BUSINESS, OR LOVE?



IT was not only in the mind of young Purcell that Lottie's circumstances and prospects were the subject of thought. Rollo Ridsdale had not watched and worshipped as the young musician had done. Nor had he, even on his first introduction to her, looked upon Lottie as anything but the possessor of a beautiful voice, of which use might be made, for her benefit no doubt in the long run, but primarily for his own. She was not a divinity; she was not even a woman; she was a valuable stock-in-trade, a most important implement with which to work. Rollo

had gone through a very effectual training in this kind. He had run through the little money he possessed so soon, and had learned the use of his wits so early, that the most energetic of tradesmen was not more

alive to all the charms of gain than he. The means, perhaps, may be of a different kind, but it does not very much matter in principle whether a man is trained to sharp bargains in bric-a-brac, or in cotton bales; and it is not essentially a loftier trade to speculate in pictures and china than in shares and stocks. This young aristocrat had kept his eyes very wide open to anything that might come in his way. He was not a director of companies chiefly because his poor little Honourable was not a sufficiently valuable possession to be traded upon, though it had some small value pecuniarily. Lord Courtland himself might indeed have made a few hundreds a year out of his title, but to his second son the name was not worth as much. It secured him some advantages. It gave him the *entrée* to places where things were to be "picked up," and it helped him to puff and even to dispose of the wares which he might have in hand. It kept him afloat; it ameliorated poverty; it took away all objections to the sale and barter in which, profitably or unprofitably, he spent so much of his life. Had he gone upon the Stock Exchange, society might have made comments upon the strange necessity; but when Rollo's collection of *objets d'art* was sold, nobody found anything to object to in the transaction, which put a comfortable sum in his pocket, and enabled him to go forth to fresh fields and pastures new; neither was there anything unbecoming his nobility in the enterprise which he had now in hand. Theatres are not generally a very flourishing branch of commerce; yet it cannot be denied that those who ruin themselves by them, embark in the enterprise with as warm an inclination towards gain as any shopkeeper could boast of. Rollo had thought of Lottie's voice as something quite distinct from any personality. It was a commodity he would like to buy, as he would have liked to buy a picture, or anything rare and beautiful, of which he could be sure that he would get more than his own money for it. In that, as in other things, he would have bought in the cheapest market and sold in the dearest. He would have thought it only right and natural to secure at a low rate the early services of a prima donna. A certain amount of enthusiasm no doubt mingled with the business; just as, had Rollo bought a picture and sold it again, he would have derived a considerable amount of enjoyment from it over and above the profit which went into his pocket; but still he would not have bought the picture, or sought out the future prima donna, on any less urgent and straightforward stimulus than that of gain. Probably, too, the artistic temperament—those characteristics which have to answer for so many things—influenced him more in the pursuit of the talent which was to make his fortune, than any man is ever influenced by bales of cotton or railway shares. To hear that "shirtings are firm" does not thrill the heart as it does to hear the melody of a lovely new voice, which you feel will pay you nobly by transporting the rest of the world as it does yourself. Neither could any amount of coupons fill you with delight like that small scrap of a Bellini by which you hope to *faire fortune*. But, nevertheless, to make his fortune was what Rollo thought of just

as much as the man who sells dusters over his counter. If a new kind of duster could be found more efficacious than any previously known, a something that would dust by itself, that would sell by the million, no doubt the shopkeeper, too, would feel a moment's enthusiasm; yet in this he would be quite inferior to the inventor of a new prima donna, who, added to his enjoyment of all that the public gave to hear her, would have the same enjoyment as had the public, without giving anything for it at all.

This had been the simple enthusiasm in Rollo's mind up to his last meeting with Lottie Despard. He had pursued her closely that he might fully understand and know all the qualities of her voice—of the slave he wanted to buy: to know exactly what training it would want, and how much would have to be done to it before it could appear before the public, and begin to pay back what he had given for it. And point by point, as he pursued this quest of his, he had noted in her the qualities of beauty, the grace, the expression, the perfection of form and feature, which were so many additional advantages. The rush of colour to her cheek, of spirit or softness to her eyes, had delighted him, as proving in her the power to be an actress as well as a singer. He studied all her looks, interpreted her character to himself, and watched her movements with this end, with a frank indifference to every other, not even thinking what interpretation might be put, what interpretation she might herself put, upon this close and anxious attention. It was not till the evening when, overcome by the feelings which music and excitement had roused in her, Lottie had fled alone to her home, avoiding his escort, that he had suddenly awoke to the consciousness that it was no mere voice, but a young and beautiful woman, with whom he was dealing. The awakening gave him a shock—yet there was pleasure in it, and a flattering consciousness that his prima donna had all along been regarding him in no abstract, but an entirely individual, way. Rollo had been brought up among artificial sentiments. He had been used to hear people talk of the effect of music upon their imagination—of the sensations it gave them, and the manner in which they were dominated by it. But he had never seen any one honestly moved like Lottie—abandoning the sphere of her social success, silent in the height of her triumph. When he saw that she could not and would not sing again after that wonderful sacred song, he was himself more vividly impressed than he had ever been by music. It took her voice from her, and her breath—transported her out of herself. How strange it was, yet how real, how natural! just (when you came to think of it) as a pure and elevated mind ought to be touched: though he had never yet seen the fumes of art get so completely into any head before. The reality of Lottie's emotion had awakened Rollo. He was not touched himself by Handel, but he was touched by Lottie. He suddenly saw *her* through the mist of his own preconceived ideas, and through the cloud of conventionalities, those of art and those of society alike. Never in his life before had he

so suddenly and distinctly come in contact with a genuine human creature, as God had made her—feeling, moving, living according to the dictates of nature, not as she had been trained to live and feel. This is not to say that he had met with no genuine people in his life. His father and mother were real enough, and so was his aunt, Lady Caroline—very real, each in his or her little setting of conveniences and necessities. He knew them, and was quite indifferent to knowing them. But Lottie was altogether detached from the atmosphere in which these good people lived. And he had discovered her suddenly, making acquaintance with her in a moment—finding her out as an astronomer, all alone with the crowds of heaven, finds out a new star. This was how it made so great an impression on him. He had discovered her, standing quite alone among all the women who knew how to express and to control their emotions. She was not trained either to one or the other. The emotion, the enthusiasm in her got the upper hand of her, not she of them. A man who is only used to men and women in the secondary stages of well-sustained emotion is apt to be doubly impressed by the sight of genuine and artless passion, of whatever kind it may be. He went to town thinking not of the prima donna he had found, but of the woman who had suddenly made heaven and earth real to him, as they were to her. He posted up to London—that is, he flew thither in the express train, according to the dictates of his first impulse; but he was so entirely carried away by this second one, that he had almost forgotten his primary purpose altogether. “Ah! that is it,” he said to himself when the prima donna idea once more flashed across his mind. He did not want to lose sight of this, or to be negligent of anything that would help to make his fortune.

Rollo was in the greatest need of having his fortune made. He had nothing except very expensive habits. He was obliged to spend a great deal of money in order to live, and he was obliged to live (or so, at least, he thought); and he had no money at all. Therefore a prima donna or something else was absolutely necessary. Accordingly he wound himself up with great energy, and tried to think no more of that other world which Lottie's touch had plunged him into. In the meantime, in this world of theatres, drawing-rooms, and fashionable coteries, where people are compelled to live, whether they will or not, at an enormous cost in money, and where accordingly money must be hunted wherever scent of it can be found, it was necessary that some one, or something, should make Rollo Ridsdale's fortune. He rushed to his impresario, and roused a faint enthusiasm momentarily in the mind of that man of great undertakings. An English prima donna, a native article, about whom the English would go wild! Yes! But would they go wild over an English prima donna? Would not the first step be, ere she was presented to the public at all, to fit her with an Italian name? Signorina Carlotta Desparda—that was what she would have to be called. The impresario shook his head. “And, besides, these native articles never

turn out what we are led to expect," he said. He shook his head; he was sorry, very sorry, to disappoint his *confrère*, but——

"But—I tell you, you never heard such a voice; the compass of it—the sweetness of it! *simpatica* beyond what words can say—fresh as a lark's—up to anything you can put before her—and with such power of expression. We shall be fools, utter fools, if we neglect such a chance."

"You are very warm," said the Manager, rubbing his hands. "She is pretty, I suppose?"

"No," said Rollo; "she is beautiful—and with the carriage of a queen." (Poor Lottie, in her white frock; how little she knew that there was anything queenlike about her!) "Come down and see her. That is all I ask of you. Come and hear her——"

"Where may that be?" said the Manager. "I am leaving town on Monday. Can't we have her up to your rooms, or somewhere at hand?"

"My rooms!" said Rollo, thunderstruck. He knew very little about Lottie, except that she was a poor Chevalier's daughter; but he felt that he could have as easily invited one of the Princesses to come and sing in his rooms, that the representatives of the new opera company might judge of her gifts. His face grew so long that his colleague laughed.

"Is she a personage then, Ridsdale? Is she one of your great friends?" he said.

"She is one of my—friends; but she is not a great personage," said Rollo gloomily, pulling the little peaked beard which he cultivated, and thinking that it would be as difficult to get his manager invited to the Deanery as it would be to bring Lottie to Jermyn Street. These were difficulties which he had not foreseen. He went over the circumstances hurriedly, trying to think what he could do. Could he venture to go in suddenly to the Chevalier's lodge, as he had done with Lady Caroline's credentials in his pocket, but this time without any credentials, and introduce his companion, and without further ceremony proceed to test the powers of the girl, who he knew was not always compliant nor to be reckoned on? What if she should decline to be tried? What if she had no intention of becoming a singer at all? What if the Manager should condemn her voice as untrained (which it was), or even mistake it altogether, mixing it up with the cracked tones of the old piano, and the jingle of the Abbey bells? He had not thought of all these difficulties before. He had not taken time to ask if Lottie would be docile, if Lady Caroline would be complaisant. He pulled his beard, his face growing longer and longer. At last he said,—

"I'll tell you what we can do. We can go to Mrs. O'Shaughnessy——"

"Who on earth is Mrs. O'Shaughnessy?" said the Manager.

"But, very likely there is no piano there! You see, this is a difficulty I did not think of. I have heard this lady only in the house of—one of my relations, a very rigid old person, who hates theatres, and thinks opera an invention of the devil." How Rollo dared slander poor

Lady Carolineso, who liked an opera-box as well as any one else, it is impossible to say.

"Well—it doesn't seem to matter much what are the qualities of the voice if we can't hear it," the Manager said carelessly; and he told his fashionable partner of the singer he had heard of in Milan, who was to distance all the singers then on the operatic stage. "They are all like that," he said—"like this private nightingale of yours, Ridsdale—till you hear them; and then they turn out to be very much like the rest. To tell the truth, I am not so very sorry this particular *protégée* of yours has broken down; for I don't believe the time has come for an English prima donna, if it ever comes. We've got no confidence in ourselves, so far as art goes—especially musical art. English opera, sir; there's many fine pieces, but you'll never keep it up in England. It might make a hit, perhaps, in Germany, or even France, but not here. Your English prima donna would be considered fit for the music-halls. We'd have to dress her up in vowels, and turn her into an Italian. Contemptible? Oh, yes, it's contemptible; but, if we're to make our own money out of it, we mustn't trouble ourselves about what's contemptible. What we've got to do is to please the public. I'm just as glad that this idea of yours has broken down."

"Broken down! I will never allow it has broken down. It is much easier and pleasanter, of course, to go to Milan than to go to St. Michael's," said Rollo disdainfully. "But never mind; if you don't start till Monday, trust me to arrange it somehow. Your new Milanese, of course, will be like all the rest. She will have been brought up to it. She will know how to do one thing, and no more; but this is genius—owing nothing to education and everything to nature. Capable of—I could not say what such a voice and such a woman is not capable of——"

"Bravo, Ridsdale!" said his partner. "She is capable of stirring you up thoroughly, that is clear—and I hope she will be kind to you," he said, with a big laugh, full of insinuations. The man was vulgar and fat, but a mountain of energy, and Rollo, though disgusted, could not afford to quarrel with him.

"You are entirely out in your notion," he said, with that air of dignity which is apt to look fictitious in such circumstances. He was not himself easily shocked, nor would this interpretation of his motives have appeared to him at all unlikely in the case of another man; therefore, as was natural, his gravity and look of disgust only confirmed the suspicions of the other, and amused him the more.

"Bravo, my boy; go in and win!" he said, chuckling; "promise whatever you like, if you find it necessary, and trust to me to back you up."

To say "I am unable to understand what you mean," as Rollo did, with cold displeasure, yet consciousness, did but increase the ecstasy of the fat Manager over the evident fact that his fastidious friend was "caught at last."

Rollo went away with a great deal of offended dignity, holding him-

self stiffly erect, body and soul. He had never been so entirely disgusted, revolted, by the coarse character of the ideas and insinuations, which in themselves were not particularly novel, he was aware. It was because everything grew coarse under the touch of such a fellow as this, he said to himself; and it must be allowed that vice, stripped of all sentiment and adornment, was a disgusting spectacle. Rollo had never been a vicious man. He had taken it calmly in others, acknowledging that, if they liked it, he had no right to interfere; but he had not cared for it much himself—he was not a man of passions. A dilettante generally does avoid these coarser snares of humanity; and there had always been a sense of nausea in his mind when he was brought in contact with the vicious. But this nausea had been more physical than spiritual. It was not virtue but temperament which produced it; his own temptations were not in this kind. Nevertheless, he knew that to show any exaggerated feeling on the subject would only expose him to laughter, and he was not courageous enough either to blame warmly in others, or to decry strenuously in himself, the existence of unlawful bonds. What did it matter to anybody if he were virtuous? his neighbours were not on that account to be balked of their cakes and ale; his disinclination towards sins of the grosser kind was not a thing he was proud of—it was a constitutional peculiarity, like inability to ascend heights or to go to sea without suffering. He was not at all sure that it was not a sign of weakness—a thing to be kept out of sight. Accordingly he took his part in the social gossip, which has no warmer interest than this, like everybody else, never pretended to any superiority, and took it for granted that now and then everybody “went wrong.” He would have been a monster if he had done anything else. Why, even his good aunt Caroline—the best and stupidest of women, to whom, if she had desired it, no opportunity of going wrong had ever presented itself—liked to hear these stories and believed them implicitly, and was convinced that not to go wrong was quite exceptional. Rollo was not the man to emancipate himself from such a complete and universal understanding. He allowed it calmly, and did not pretend either to disapprove or to doubt. Probably he had himself coldly, and as a matter of course, “gone wrong” too in his day, and certainly he had never given himself out as at all better than his neighbours. Was it only the coarseness of his vulgar associate which made the suggestion so deeply disgusting to him now?

He asked himself this question as, disappointed and annoyed, he left the Manager's ostentatious rooms; and a new sense of unkindness, ungenerosity, unmanliness in having exposed a harmless person, a woman whose reputation should be sacred, to such animadversions, suddenly came into his mind, he could not tell how. This view of the matter had never occurred to Rollo before. The women he had heard discussed—and he had heard almost everybody discussed, from the highest to the lowest—had nothing sacred about them to the laughing gossips who discussed all they had done, or might have done, or might be going to do. This,

too, was a new idea to him. Who was there whom he had not heard spoken of? ladies a thousand times more important than Miss Despard, the poor Chevalier's daughter at St. Michael's—and nobody had seemed to think there was any harm in it. A man's duty not to let a woman be lightly spoken of? Pooh! What an exaggerated sentimental piece of nonsense! Why should not women take their chance like any one else? Rollo was like most other persons when in a mental difficulty of this kind. He was not so much discussing with himself as he was the arena of a discussion which unseen arguers were holding within him. While one of these uttered this Pooh! another replied, with a heat and fervour altogether unknown to the clubs, What had Lottie Despard done to subject herself to these suggestions? she who knew nothing about society and its evil thoughts—she who had it in her to be uplifted and transported by the music at which these other people, at the best, would clap their hands and applaud. The argument in Rollo's mind went all against himself and his class. He hated not only his manager-partner, whom it was perfectly right and natural to hate, but himself and all the rest of his kind. He was so much disgusted that he almost made up his mind to let fortune and the English prima donna go together, and to take no further step to make the girl known to those who were so incapable of appreciating her. But when he came that length Rollo had reached the end of his tether, struck against the uttermost limits of his horizon—and thus was brought back suddenly to the question how he was best to make his prize known?

CHAPTER XX.

AN UNCONSCIOUS TRIAL.

It turned out, however, that Rollo could not accomplish the object, which he had aimed at with so much eagerness and hope, in the only legitimate way. He could not get his Manager invited to the Deanery. "I don't think your aunt would like it; I don't think I could sanction it," the Dean said, whom he met at his club. Unfortunately the Dean had somewhere encountered the partner by whose aid Rollo expected to make his fortune, and he made it the subject of a little discourse, which Rollo received with impatience. "I would have nothing to do with him if I were you," his Reverence said; "he is not a kind of man to be any credit to his associates. You can't touch pitch without being defiled. I would not have anything to say to him if I were you."

"Nor should I, uncle, if I were you," said Rollo, with a rueful smile. He was not aware that this was not original; he was not thinking, indeed, of originality, but of the emergency, which he felt was very difficult to deal with.

"Nonsense!" said the Dean; "don't tell me there are not a great many better occupations going than that of managing a theatre——"

"Opera—opera. Give us our due at least——"

"What difference is there?" said the Dean sternly. "The opera has ruined just as many men as the theatre. Talk of making your fortune! Did you ever hear of the lessee of a theatre making a fortune? Plenty have been ruined by it, and never one made rich that I ever heard of. Why can't you go into diplomacy or to a public office, or get your Uncle Urban to give you something? You ought not to have anything to do with such a venture as this."

"My dear uncle," said Rollo, "you know well enough how many things I have tried. Uncles are very kind (as in your case), but they can't take all their relations upon their shoulders; and you knew this was what I was doing, and Aunt Caroline knew——"

"Ah! yes; I recollect that was what all the singing was about; but she could not stand that Manager fellow. I could not stand him myself; as for your aunt, you could not expect it. She is very good-natured, but you could not ask her to go so far as that."

"He is a man who goes everywhere," said Rollo; "he is a man who can behave himself perfectly well wherever he is."

"Oh, bless you, she would see through him at a glance!" cried the Dean. "I don't mean to say your aunt is clever, Rollo, but instinct goes a long way. She would see through him. Miss Despard was quite different; she was perfectly *comme il faut*. Girls are wonderful sometimes in that way. Though they may have no advantages they seem to pick up and look just as good as any one: whereas a man like that—— By the way, I am very sorry for the poor thing. They say her father, a disreputable sort of gay man who never should have got the appointment, is going to marry some low woman. It will be hard upon the girl."

What an opportunity was this of seizing hold upon her—of overcoming any objection that might arise! Rollo felt himself Lottie's best friend as he heard of this complication. While she might help to make his fortune he could make her independent, above the power of any disreputable father or undesirable home. He could not bear to think that such a girl should be lost in conditions so wretched, and, though the Dean was obdurate, he did not lose hope. But between Thursday and Monday is not a very long time for such negotiations, and the Manager was entirely preoccupied by his Milanese, whom another impresario was said to be on the track of, and in whom various connoisseurs were interested. It is impossible to describe the scorn and incredulity with which Rollo himself heard his partner's account of this new singer. He put not the slightest faith in her.

"I know how she will turn out," he said. "She will shriek like a peacock; she will have to be taught her own language; she will be coached up for one *rôle* and good for nothing else; and she will smell of garlic enough to kill you."

"Oh, garlic will never kill me!" said the vulgar partner who gave Rollo so much trouble.

In the meantime he wrote to the Signor to see what could be done, and begged with the utmost urgency that he would arrange something. "Perhaps the old Irishwoman next door would receive us," Rollo said, "even if she has got no piano. Try, my dear Rossinetti, I implore you; try your best." The Signor was very willing to serve the Dean's nephew; but he was at the moment very much put out by Lottie's reception of young Purcell, as much as if it had been himself that had been refused.

"Who is Mrs. O'Shaughnessy, and how am I to communicate with her?" he cried; and he did not throw himself into the work with any zeal. All that he would do at last, moved by Rollo's repeated letters, was to bid him bring his friend down to the service on Sunday afternoon, when he would see Lottie at least, and hear something of her voice. The Manager grinned at this invitation. He was not an enthusiast for Handel, and shrugged his shoulders at sacred music generally as much out of his line; but he ended, having no better engagement on hand, by consenting to go. It was the end of the season; the opera was over, and all its fashionable patrons dispersed; and St. Michael's was something to talk of at least. So the two connoisseurs arrived on a warm afternoon of early August, when the grey pinnacles of the Abbey blazed white in excessive sunshine, and the river showed like glowing metal here and there through the broad valley, too brilliant to give much refreshment to the eyes.

As it happened, it was a chance whether Lottie would attend the service that afternoon at all. She was sorry for poor Purcell, and embarrassed to face the congregation in the Abbey, some of whom at least must know the story. She was certain the Signor knew it, from the glance he had thrown at her; and Mrs. Purcell, she felt sure, would gloom at her from the free seats, and the hero himself look wistful and reproachful from the organ-loft. She had very nearly made up her mind not to go. Would it not be better to go out on the slopes, and sit down under a tree, and hear the music softly pealing at a distance, and get a little rest out of her many troubles? Lottie had almost decided upon this when suddenly, by a caprice, she changed her mind and went. Everything came true as she had divined. Mrs. Purcell fixed her eyes upon her from the moment she sat down in her place, with a gloomy interest which sadly disconcerted Lottie; and so did old Pick, who sat by his fellow-servant and chuckled over the conclusion of Mr. John's romance; while once at least Lottie caught the pale dullness of the Signor's face looking disapproval, and at every spare moment the silent appeal of Purcell's eyes looking down from over the railing of the organ-loft. Lottie's heart revolted a little in resistance to all these pitiful and disapproving looks. Why should they insist upon it? If she could not accept young Purcell, what was it to the Signor and old Pick?—though his mother might be forgiven if she felt the disappointment of her boy. The girl shrank a little from all those glances, and gave herself up altogether to her devotions. Was it to her devotions? There was the

Captain chanting all the responses within hearing, cheerful and self-confident, as if the Abbey belonged to him; and there, too, was Law, exchanging glances of a totally different description with the people in the free seats. It was to two fair-haired girls whom Lottie had seen before—who were, indeed, constant in their attendance on the Sunday afternoon—that Law was signalling, and they, on their part, tittered and whispered, and looked at the Captain in his stall, and at another woman in a veil whom Lottie did not make out. This was enough to distract her from the prayers, to which, however, if only to escape from the confusion of her own thoughts, she did her very best to give full attention. But—— She put up her prayer-book in front of her face, and hid herself at least from all the crowd, so full each of his and her own concerns. She was silent during the responses, hearing nothing but her father's voice with its tone of proprietorship, and only allowed herself to sing when the Captain's baritone was necessarily silent. Lottie's voice had become known to the people who sat near her. They looked for her as much as they looked for little Rowley himself, who was the first soprano; but to-day they did not get much from Lottie. Now and then she forgot herself, as in the Magnificat, when she burst forth suddenly unawares, almost taking it out of the hands of the boys; but while she was singing Lottie came to herself almost as suddenly, and stopped short, with a quaver and shake in her voice as if the thread of sound had been suddenly broken. Raising her eyes in the midst of the canticle, she had seen Rollo Ridsdale within a few places of her, holding his book before him very decorously, yet looking from her to a large man by his side with unmistakable meaning. The surprise of seeing him whom she believed to be far away, the agitation it gave her to perceive that she herself was still the chief point of interest to him, and the sudden recalling thus of her consciousness, gave her a shock which extinguished her voice altogether. There was a thrill in the music as if a string had broken; and then the hymn went on more feebly, diminished in sweetness and volume, while she stood trembling, holding herself up with an effort. He had come back again, and again his thoughts were full of her, his whole attention turned to her. An instantaneous change took place in Lottie's mind. Instead of the jumble of annoyances and vexations that had been around her—the reproachful looks on one side, the family discordance on the other—her father and Law both jarring with all that Lottie wished and thought right—a flood of celestial calm poured into her soul. She was no longer angry with the two fair-haired girls who tittered and whispered through the service, looking up to Law with a hundred telegraphic communications. She was scarcely annoyed when her father's voice pealed forth again in pretentious incorrectness. She did not mind what was happening around her. The sunshine that came in among the pinnacles and fretwork above in a golden mist, lighting up every detail, yet confusing them in a dazzle and glory which common eyes could not bear, made just such an effect on the canopies of the stalls as Rollo's ap-

pearance made on Lottie's mind. She was all in a dazzle and mist of sudden calm and happiness which seemed to make everything bright, yet blurred everything in its soft, delicious glow.

"Don't think much of her," said the Manager, as they came out. The two were going back again at once to town, but Rollo's partner had supposed that at least they would first pay a visit to the Deanery. He was a man who counted duchesses on his roll of acquaintances, but he liked to add a Lady Caroline whenever the opportunity occurred, and deans, too, had their charm. He was offended when he saw that Rollo had no such intention, and at once divined that he was not considered a proper person to be introduced to the heads of such a community. This increased his determination not to yield to his partner in this fancy of his, which, indeed, he had always considered presumptuous, finding voices being his own share of the work—a thing much too important to be trusted to an amateur. "The boy has a sweet little pipe of his own; but as for your prima donna, Ridsdale, if you think that sort of thing would pay with us——! No, no! my good fellow; she's a deuced handsome girl, and I wish you joy; I don't wonder that she should have turned your head; but for our new house, not if I know it, my boy. A very nice voice for an amateur, but that sort of thing does not do with the public."

"You scarcely heard her at all; and the few notes she did sing were so mixed up with those scrubby little boys——"

"Oh! I heard her, and I don't care to hear her again—unless it were in a drawing-room. Why, there's Rossinetti," said the impresario; "he'll tell you just the same as I do. Do you know what we're down here for, Rossinetti, eh? Deluded by Ridsdale to come and hear some miraculous voice; and it turns out to be only a charming young lady who has bewitched him, as happens to the best of us. Pretty voice for a drawing-room, nice amateur quality; but for the profession—— I tell him you must know that as well as I."

"Come into my place and rest a little; there is no train just yet," said the Signor. He had left Purcell to play the voluntary, and led the strangers through the nave, which was still crowded with people listening to the great strains of the organ. "Come out this way," he said; "I don't want to be seen. Purcell plays quite as well as I do; but if they see me they will stream off, and hurt his feelings. Poor boy! he has had enough to vex him already."

These words were on his lips when, coming out by a private door, the three connoisseurs suddenly came upon Lottie, who was walking home with Mrs. O'Shaughnessy. The Signor, who was noted for a womanish heat of partisanship and had not forgiven her for the disappointment of his pupil, darted a violent glance at her as he took off his hat. It might have been himself that she had rejected, so full of offence was his look; and this fixed the attention of the big manager, who took off his hat, too, with a smile of secret amusement, and watched the scene, making a private

memorandum to the effect that Rossinetti evidently had been hit also; and no wonder! a handsome girl as you could see in a summer day, with a voice that was a very nice voice, a really superior voice for an amateur.

As for Rollo, he hastened up to Mrs. O'Shaughnessy with fervour, and held out his hand; and how happy and how proud was that kind woman! She curtsied as she took his hand as if he had been the Prince of Wales, nearly pulling him down, too, ere she recovered herself; and her countenance shone, partly with the heat, partly with the delight.

"And I hope I see *you* well, sir," she said; "and glad to see you back in St. Michael's; there's nothing like young people for keeping a place cheerful. Though we don't go into society, me and me Major, yet it's a pleasure to see the likes of you about."

Rollo had time to turn to Lottie with very eloquent looks while this speech was being addressed to him. "I am only here for half an hour," he said; "I could not resist the temptation of coming for the service."

"Oh! me dear sir, you wouldn't care so much for the sarvice if ye had as much of it as we have," said Mrs. O'Shaughnessy, going on well pleased; she liked to hear herself talking, and she had likewise a quick perception of the fact that, while she talked, communications of a different kind might go on between "the young folks." "Between ourselves, it's not me that they'll get to stop for their playing," she said, all the more distinctly that the Signor was within hearing. "I'd go five miles to hear a good band; the music was beautiful in the regiment when O'Shaughnessy was adjutant. And for me own part, Mr. Ridsdale, I'd not give the drums and the fifes for the most elegant music you could play. I don't say that I'm a judge, but I know what I like."

"Why did you stop so soon?" Rollo said, aside. "Ah! Miss Despard, was it not cruel?"—"A good band is an excellent thing, Mrs. O'Shaughnessy; I shall try to get my uncle to have the band from the dépôt to play once a week, next time I come here."—"Thanks all the same for those few notes; I shall live upon them," he added fervently, "till I have the chance of hearing you again."

Lottie made no reply. It was unnecessary with Mrs. O'Shaughnessy there, and talking all the time. And, indeed, what had she to say? The words spread themselves like a balm into every corner of her heart. He would not have gone so far, nor spoken so warmly, if it had not been for the brutal indifference of the big manager, who stood looking on at a distance, with an air of understanding a great deal more than there was to understand. The malicious knowingness in this man's eyes made Rollo doubly anxious in his civilities; and then he felt it necessary to make up to Lottie for the other's blasphemy in respect to her voice, though of this Lottie knew nothing at all.

"I shall not even have time to see my aunt," he said; "how fortunate that I have had this opportunity of a word with you! I did not know whether I might take the liberty to call."

"And welcome, Mr. Ridsdale," said Mrs. O'Shaughnessy. "Lottie's

but a child, so to speak ; but I and the Major would be proud to see you. And of an afternoon we're always at home, and, though I say it as shouldn't, as good a cup of tea to offer ye as ye'd get from me Lady Caroline herself. It's ready now, if you'll accept the refreshment, you and—your friend."

"A thousand thanks, but we must not stay. Mrs. O'Shaughnessy, if you see my aunt will you explain how it was I could not come to see her? and be sure you tell her you met me at the Abbey door, or she will not like it. Miss Despard, Augusta is coming home, and I hope to be at the Deanery next month. *Then* I trust you will be more generous, and not stop singing as soon as you see me. What had I done?" he cried in his appealing voice.—"Yes, Rossinetti, I'm coming."—"Not Good-by, Mrs. O'Shaughnessy, only, as the French say, Till we meet again."

"And I hope that will not be long," said the good woman, delighted She swept along the Dean's Walk, letting her dress trail after her and holding her head high ; she was too much excited to think of holding up her skirts. "Did ye hear him, Lottie, me honey? 'If you see my aunt,' says he. Lord bless the man! as if me Lady Caroline was in the way of looking in and taking a cup of tea! Sure, I'd make her welcome, and more sense than shutting herself up in that old house, and never stirring, no, not to save her life. 'If ye see me aunt,' says he. Oh, yes! me darlint, I'll see her, shut up in her state, and looking as if—He'll find the difference when he comes to the Deanery, as he says. Not for you, Lottie, me dear; you're one of themselves, so to speak. But it's not much thanks me Lady Caroline will give him for sending her a message by Mrs. O'Shaughnessy; I thought I'd burst out in his face. 'Tell her ye met me by the Abbey door.' That's to save me lady's feelings, Lottie. But I'll do his bidding next time I see her; I'll make no bones of it, I'll up and give her my message. Lord! just to see how me lady would take it. See if I don't now. For him, he's a jewel, take me word for it, Lottie; and ye'll be a silly girl, me honey, if you let a gentleman like Mr. Ridsdale slip through your fingers. A real gentleman, ye can see as much by his manners. If I'd been a duchess, Lottie, me dear, what more could he say?"

Lottie made no reply to this speech, any more than to the words Rollo himself had addressed to her. Her mind was all in a confused maze of happy thoughts and anticipations. His looks, his words, were all turned to the same delicious meaning; and he was coming back to the Deanery, when she was to be "more generous" to him. No compliment could have been so penetrating as that soft reproach. Lottie had no words to spend upon her old friend, who, for her part, was sufficiently exhilarated to require no answer. Mrs. O'Shaughnessy rang the changes upon this subject all the way to the Lodges. "'When you see my aunt,' says he." The idea that she was in the habit of visiting Lady Caroline familiarly, not only amused but flattered her, though it was difficult enough to understand how this latter effect could come about.

Rollo was himself moved more than he could have imagined possible by this encounter. He said nothing as he followed his companions to the Signor's house, and did not even remark what they were saying, so occupied was he in going over again the trivial events of the last few minutes. As he did so, it occurred to him for the first time that Lottie had not so much as spoken to him all the time; not a word had she said, though he had found no deficiency in her. It was evident, then, that there might be a meeting which should fill a man's mind with much pleasant excitement and commotion, and leave on his thoughts a very delightful impression, without one word said by the lady. This idea amused him in the pleasant agitation of his being to which the encounter at the church door had given rise. He forgot what he had come for, and the rudeness of his partner, and the refusal of that personage to think at all of Lottie. He did not want any further discussion of this question; he had forgotten, even, that it could require to be discussed. Somehow all at once, yet completely, Lottie had changed character to him; he did not want to talk her over with any one, and he forgot altogether the subject upon which the conversation must necessarily turn when he followed the Signor and his big companion through the groups of people who began to emerge from the Abbey. There were a great many who stared at Rollo, knowing who he was, but none who roused him from his pre-occupation. Fortunately the Dean had a cold and was not visible, and Lady Caroline did not profess to go to church in the afternoon—"It was too soon after lunch, and there were so many people, and one never felt that one had the Abbey to one's self," her ladyship said.

The Manager went off to Italy the next day, after his Milanese, without being at all restrained by Rollo, who was glad to get rid of him, and to have no more said about the English prima donna. He did not quite like it even, so perverse was he, when the Signor, sitting out upon his terrace, defended her against the impresario's hasty verdict: "She has a beautiful voice, so far as that goes," the Signor said, with the gravity of a judge; "you are mistaken if you do not admire her voice; we have had occasion to hear it, and we know what it is, so far as that goes."

"You dog!" said the jovial manager, with a large fat laugh; "I see something else if I don't see that. Ah, Rossinetti! hit too?"

"Do you happen to know what he means?" said the Signor with profound gravity, turning his fine eyes upon Ridsdale. "Ah! it is a pleasantry, I suppose; I have not the same appreciation of humour that I might have had, had I been born an Englishman," he said, with a seriousness that was portentous, without relaxing a muscle.

Rollo, who was not aware of the vehement interest with which the Signor espoused Purcell's cause, felt the Manager's suspicions echo through his own mind. He knew how entirely disinclined he felt to enter upon this question. Was his companion right, and had the Signor been hit, too? It seemed to Rollo that the wonder was how any one

could avoid that catastrophe. The manager made very merry, as they went back to town, upon Lottie's voice and the character of the admiration which it had excited; but all this Rollo received with as much solemnity of aspect as characterised the Signor.

CHAPTER XXI.

SEARCHINGS OF HEART.

It was not to be supposed that the visit of Rollo and his companion should pass unnoticed in so small a community as that of St. Michael's, where everybody knew him, and in which he had all the importance naturally belonging to a member, so to speak, of the reigning family. Everybody noticed his appearance in the Abbey, and it soon became a matter of general talk that he was not at the Deanery, but had come down from town expressly for the service, returning by as early a train afterwards as the Sunday regulations of the railway allowed. What did he come for? Not to see his relations, which would have been a comprehensible reason for so brief a visit. He had been seen talking to somebody at the north door, and he had been seen following the Signor, in company with a large and brilliant person who wore more rings and studs and *breloques* than had ever been seen at St. Michael's. Finally, this remarkable stranger, who was evidently a friend of the Signor as well as of Rollo, had been visible on the little green terrace outside Rossinetti's sitting-room, smoking cigarettes and drinking claret-cup, and tilting up his chair upon two legs in a manner which suggested a tea-garden, critics said, more than a studious nook sheltered among the buttresses of the Abbey. Public opinion was instinctively unfavourable to Rollo's companion; but what was the young prince, Lady Caroline's nephew, doing there? Then the question arose, Who was it to whom Rollo had been talking at the north door? All the Canons and their wives, and the ladies in the Lodges, and even the townspeople when the story reached them, cried out, "Impossible!" when they were told that it was Mrs. O'Shaughnessy. But that lady had no intention of concealing the honour done her. She published it, so to speak, on the housetops. She neglected no occasion of making her friends acquainted with all the particulars of the interview. "And who should it have been but me?" she said. "Is there e'er another one at St. Michael's that knows as much of his family? Who was it but an uncle of his, or maybe it might be a cousin, that was in the regiment with us, and O'Shaughnessy's greatest friend? Many's the good turn the Major's done him; and, say the worst you can o' the Ridsdales, it's not ungrateful they are. It's women that are little in their ways. What does a real gentleman care for our little quarrels and the visiting list at the Deanery? 'When ye see me aunt,' says he, 'Mrs. O'Shaughnessy, ye'll tell her——' Sure he took it for certain that me Lady Caroline was a good neighbour, and would

step in of an afternoon for her bit of talk and her cup o' tea. 'You'll tell her,' says he, 'that I hadn't time to go and see her.' And, please God, I will do it when I've got the chance. If her ladyship forgets her manners, it shall ne'er be said that O'Shaughnessy's wife was wanting in good breeding to a family the Major had such close connections with."

"But do you really know—Mr. Ridsdale's family?" said Lottie, after one of these brilliant addresses, somewhat bewildered by her recollection of what had passed. "And, sure, didn't you hear me say so? Is it doubting me word you are?" said Mrs. O'Shaughnessy, with a twinkle in her eye. Lottie was bewildered—but it did not matter much. At this moment nothing seemed to matter very much. She had been dull, and she had been troubled by many things before the wonderful moment in which she had discovered Rollo close to her in the Abbey—much troubled, foreseeing with dismay the closing in around her of a network of new associations in which there could be nothing but pain and shame, and dull with a heavy depression of dulness which no ray of light in the present, no expectation in the future, seemed to brighten. Purcell's hand held out to her, tenderly yet half in pity, had been the only personal encouragement she had; and that had humbled her to the dust, even though she struggled with herself to do him justice. Her heart had been as heavy as lead. There had seemed to her nothing that was hopeful, nothing that was happy before her. Now all the heaviness had flown away. Why? Why for no reason at all, because this young man, whom she supposed (without any warrant for the foolish idea) to love her, had come back for an hour or two; because he was coming back on a visit. The visit was not to her, nor had she probable share in the enjoyments to be provided for Lady Caroline's nephew, and Lottie did not love him to make his very presence a delight to her. She did not love him—yet. This was the unexpressed feeling in her mind; but when a girl has got so far as this, it may be supposed that the visit of the lover whom she does not love—yet, must fill her with a thousand delightful tremors. How could she doubt his sentiments? What was it that brought him back and back again to St. Michael's? and to be led along that flowery way to the bower of bliss at the end of it, to be persuaded into love by all the flatteries and worship of a lover so delicately impassioned—could a girl's imagination conceive anything more exquisite? No, she was not in love—yet—— But there was no reason why she should not be, except the soft maidenly reluctance, the shy retreat before one who kept advancing, the instinct of coy resistance to an inevitable delight.

Into this delicate world of happiness, in which there was nothing real but all imagination, Lottie was delivered over that bright Sunday. She had no defence against it, and she did not wish to have any. She gave herself up to the dream. After that interval of heaviness, of darkness, when there was no pleasant delusion to support her, and life with all its difficulties and dangers became so real, confronting her at every

point, what an escape it was for Lottie to find herself again under the dreamy skies of that fool's paradise ! It was the Garden of Eden to her. She thought it was the true world and the other the false one. The vague terror and disgust with which her father's new plans filled her mind, floated away like a mist ; and, as for Law, what so easy as to carry him with her into the better world where she was going ! Her mind in a moment was lightened of its load. She had left home heavily ; she went back scarcely able to keep from singing in the excess of her light-heartedness, more lifted above earth than if any positive good had come to her. So long as the good is coming, and exists in the imagination only, how much more entrancing is it than anything real that ever can be ours !

The same event, however, which had so much effect upon Lottie, acted upon her family too in a manner for which she was far from being prepared. Captain Despard came in as much elated visibly as she was in her heart. There had been but little intercourse among them since the evening when the Captain had made those inquiries about Rollo, which Lottie resented so deeply. The storm had blown over, and she had nominally forgiven Law for going over to the enemy's side ; but Lottie's heart had been shut even against her brother since that night. He had forsaken her, and she had not been able to pass over his desertion of her cause. However, her heart had softened with her happiness, and she made his tea for him now more genially than she had done for weeks before. They seated themselves round the table with perhaps less constraint than usual—a result due to the smiling aspect of the Captain as well as to the softened sentiment in Lottie's heart. Once upon a time a family tea was a favourite feature in English literature, from Cowper down to Dickens, not to speak of the more exclusively domestic fiction of which it is the chosen banquet ; a great deal has been said of this nondescript (and indigestible) meal. But perhaps there must be a drawing of the curtains, a wheeling in of the sofa, a suggestion of warmth and comfort in contradistinction to storms and chills outside, as in the Opium-eater's picture of his cottage, to carry out the ideal—circumstances altogether wanting to the tea of the Despards, which was *eaten* (*passer-moi le mot*, for is it not the bread and butter that makes the meal ?) in the warmest hour of an August afternoon. The window indeed was open, and the Dean's Walk, by which the townspeople were coming and going in considerable numbers, as they always did on Sunday, was visible with its gay groups, and the prospect outside was more agreeable than the meal within. Mrs. O'Shaughnessy, next door, had loosed her cap-strings, and fanned herself at intervals as she sipped her tea. "It's hot, but sure it cools you after," she was saying to her Major. The Despard's, however, were not fat, and did not show the heat like their neighbours. Law sat at the table and pegged away resolutely at his bread and butter, having nothing to take his mind off his food, and no very exciting prospect of supper to sustain him. But the Captain took his

tea daintily, as one who had heard of a roast fowl and sausages to be ready by nine o'clock, and was therefore more or less indifferent to the bread and butter. He patted Lottie on the shoulder as she gave him his tea.

"My child," he said, "I was wrong the other day. It is not every man that would own it so frankly; but I have always been a candid man, though it has damaged me often. When I am in the wrong I am bound to confess it. Take my hand, Lottie, my love. I made a mistake."

Lottie looked at him surprised. He had taken her hand and held it, shaking it, half playfully, in his own.

"My love," he said, "you are not so candid as your poor father. You will get on all the better in the world. I withdraw everything I said, Lottie. All is going well, all is for the best. I make no doubt you can manage your own affairs a great deal better than I."

"What is it you mean, papa?"

"We will say no more, my child. I give you free command over yourself. That was a fine anthem this afternoon, and I have no doubt those were well repaid who came from a distance to hear it. Don't you think so, Lottie? Many people come from a great distance to hear the service in the Abbey, and no doubt the Signor made it known that there was to be such a good anthem to-day."

Lottie did not make any reply. She looked at him with mingled wonder and impatience. What did he mean? It had not occurred to her to connect Rollo with the anthem, but she perceived by the look on her father's face that something which would be displeasing to her was in his mind.

"What's the row?" said Law. "Who was there? I thought it was always the same old lot."

"And so it is generally the same old lot. *We* don't vary; but when pretty girls like Lottie say their prayers regularly, Heaven sends somebody to hear them. Oh, yes; there is always somebody sent to hear them. But you are quite right to allow nothing to be said about it, my child," said the Captain; "not a word, on the honour of a gentleman. Your feelings shall be respected. But it may be a comfort to you, my love, to feel that whatever happens your father is behind you, Lottie—knows and approves. My dear, I say no more."

"By Jove! What is it?" cried Law.

"It is nothing to you," said his father; "but look here, Law. See that you don't go out all over the place and leave your sister by herself, without any one to take care of her. My engagements I can't always give up, but don't let me hear that there's nobody to walk across the road with Lottie when she's asked out."

"Oh, that's it, is it?" said Law. "I thought they'd had enough of you at the Deanery, Lottie. That's going to begin again, then, I suppose?"

"I am not invited to the Deanery," said Lottie, with as much state and solemnity as she could summon up, though she trembled; "neither

is it going to begin again. There is no occasion for troubling Law or you either. I always have taken care of myself hitherto and I suppose I shall do it till the end."

"You need not get on your high horse, my child," said Captain Despard blandly. "Don't suppose that I will interfere; but it will be a consolation to you to remember that your father is watching over you, and that his heart goes with you," he added, with an unctuous roll in his voice. He laid his hand for a moment on her head, and said, "Bless you, my love," before he turned away. The Captain's emotion was great; it almost brought the tears to his manly eyes.

"What ~~is~~ the row?" said Law, when his father had gone. Law's attention had been fully occupied during the service with his own affairs, and he did not know of the reappearance of Rollo. "One would think he was going to cry over you, Lottie. What have you done?—Engagements! he has always got some engagement or other. I never knew a fellow with such a lot of friends—I shouldn't wonder if he was going to sup somewhere to-night. I wonder what they can see in him," said Law with a sigh.

"Law, are you going out too?"

"Oh, I suppose so; there is nothing to do in the house. What do you suppose a fellow can do? Reading is slow work; and, besides, it's Sunday, and it's wrong to work on Sunday. I shall go out and look round a bit, and see if I can see any one I know."

"Do you ever think, I wonder," said Lottie—"papa and you—that if it is so dull for you in the house, it must sometimes be a little dull for me?"

She was not in the habit of making such appeals, but to-night there was courage and a sense of emancipation in her which made her strong.

"You? Oh, well, I don't know—you are a girl," said Law, "and girls are used to it. I don't know what you would do if you wanted to have a little fun, eh? I daresay you don't know yourself. Yes, I shouldn't wonder if it was dull; but what can any one do? It's nature, I suppose," said Law; "there isn't any fun for girls as there is for us. Well, is there? How should I know?"

But there was "fun" for Emma and her sisters of the workroom, Law reminded himself with a compunction. "I'll tell you what, Lottie," he said hastily; "you must just do as other girls do. You must get some one to walk with you, and talk, and all that, you know. There's nothing else to be done; and you might have plenty. There's that singing fellow, that young Purcell; they say he's in love with you. Well; he's better than nobody; and you could give him the sack as soon as you saw somebody you liked better. I thought at one time that Ridsdale——"

"I think, Law," said Lottie, "you had better go out for your walk."

He laughed. He was half pleased to have roused and vexed her, yet

half sorry too. Poor Lottie! Now that she was abandoned by her grand admirer and all her fine friends, it must be dull for her, staying in the house by herself; but then what could he do, or any one? It was nature. Nature, perhaps, might be to blame for not providing "fun" for girls, but it was not for Law to set nature right. When he had got his hat, however, and brushed his hair before going out, he came back and looked at Lottie with a compunction. He could not give up meeting Emma in order to take his sister for a walk, though, indeed, this idea actually did glance across his mind as a rueful possibility. No, he could not go; he had promised Emma to meet her in the woods, and he must keep his word. But he was very sorry for Lottie. What a pity she had not some one of her own—Purcell, if nobody better! and then, when the right one came, she might throw him off. But Law did not dare to repeat his advice to this effect. He went and looked at her remorsefully. Lottie had seated herself upstairs in the little drawing-room; she was leaning her elbow on the ledge of the little deep window, and her head upon her hand. The attitude was pensive; and Law could not help thinking that to be a girl, and sit there all alone looking out of a window instead of roaming about as he did, would be something very terrible. The contrast chilled him and made him momentarily ashamed of himself. But then he reflected that there were a great many people passing up and down, and that he had often heard people say it was amusing to sit at a window. Very likely Lottie thought so; probably, on the whole, she liked that better than going out. This must be the case, he persuaded himself, or else she would have been sure to manage to get some companion; therefore he said nothing to her, but went downstairs very quietly and let himself out softly, not making any noise with the door. Law had a very pleasant walk with Emma under the trees, and enjoyed himself; but occasionally there would pass a shadow over him as he thought of Lottie sitting at the window in the little still house all alone.

But indeed, for that evening at least, Lottie was not much to be pitied. She had her dreams to fall back upon. She had what is absolutely necessary to happiness—not only something to look back to, but something to look forward to. That is the true secret of bliss—something that is coming. With that to support us, can we not bear anything? After a while, no doubt, Lottie felt, as she had often felt before, that it was dull. There was not a sound in the little house; everybody was out except herself; and it was Sunday, and she could not get her needlework to occupy her hands and help on her thoughts. As the brightness waned slowly away, and the softness of the evening lights and then the dimness of the approaching dark stole on, Lottie had a great longing to get out of doors; but she could not go and leave the house, for even the maid was out, having her Sunday walk with her young man. It was astonishing how many girls had gone wandering past the window, each with her young man. Not much wonder, perhaps, that Law had suggested this sole way of a little "fun" for a girl. Poor Law! he did not know any better;

he did not mean any harm. She laughed now at the suggestion which had made her angry at the time, for to-night Lottie could afford to laugh. But when she heard the maid-servant come in, Lottie, wearied with her long vigil and longing for a breath of cool air after the confinement of the house, agreed with herself that there would be no harm in taking one little turn upon the slopes. The townspeople had mostly gone. Now and then a couple of the old Chevaliers would come strolling homeward, having taken a longer walk in the calm of the Sunday evening than their usual turn on the slopes. Captain Temple and his wife had gone by arm-in-arm; perhaps they had been down to the evening service in the town, perhaps only out for a walk like everybody else. Gradually the strangers were disappearing; the people that belonged to the precincts were now almost the only people about, and there was no harm in taking a little walk alone; but it was not a thing Lottie cared much to do. With a legitimate errand she would go anywhere; but for a walk! The girl was shy, and full of all those natural conventional reluctances which cannot be got out of women; but she could not stay in any longer. She went out with a little blue shawl folded like a scarf—as was the fashion of the time—over her shoulders, and flitted quickly along the Dean's Walk to the slopes. All was sweet in the soft darkness and in the evening dews, the grass moist, the trees or the sky sometimes distilling a palpable dew-drop, the air coming softly over all those miles of country to touch with the tenderest salutation Lottie's cheek. She looked out upon the little town nestling at the foot of the hill with all its twinkling lights, and upon the stars that shone over the long glimmer of the river, which showed here and there, through all the valley, pale openings of light in the dark country. How sweet and still it was! The openness of the horizon, the distance, was the thing that did Lottie good. She cast her eyes to the very farthest limit of the world that lay within her sight, and drew a long breath. Perhaps it was this that caught the attention of some one who was passing. Lottie had seated herself in a corner under a tree, and she did not see this wayfarer, who was behind her; and the reader knows that she did not sigh for sorrow, but only to relieve a bosom which was very full of fanciful anticipations, hopes, and dreams. It was not likely, however, that Mr. Ashford would know that. He too was taking his evening walk; and when he heard the sigh in which so many tender and delicious fancies exhaled into the air, he thought—who could wonder!—that it was somebody in trouble; and drawing a little nearer to see if he could help, as was the nature of the man, found to his great surprise—as she, too, startled, turned round her face upon him—that it was Lottie Despard who was occupying the seat which was his favourite seat also. They both said “I beg your pardon” simultaneously, though it would be hard to tell why.

“I think I have seen you here before,” he said. “You like this time of the evening, Miss Despard, like myself—and this view.”

“Yes,” said Lottie; “but I have been sitting indoors all the after-

noon, and got tired of it at last. I did not like to come out all by myself; but I thought no one would see me now."

"Surely you may come here in all safety by yourself." The Minor Canon had too much good breeding to suggest any need of a companion, or any pity for the girl left alone. Then he said suddenly, "This is an admirable chance for me. The first time we met, Miss Despard, you mentioned something about which you wished to consult me——"

"Ah!" cried Lottie, coming back out of her dreams. Yes, she had wanted to consult him, and the opportunity must not be neglected. "It was about Law, Mr. Ashford. Law—his name is Lawrence, you know, my brother; he is a great boy, almost a man—more than eighteen. But I am afraid he is very backward. I want him so very much to stand his examination. It seems that nothing—nothing can be done without that now."

"His examination—for what?"

"Oh, Mr. Ashford," said Lottie, "for anything! I don't mind what it is. I thought, perhaps, if you would take him it would make him see the good of working. We are—poor; I need not make any fuss about saying that; here we are all poor; and if I could but see Law in an office earning his living, I think," cried Lottie, with the solemnity of a martyr, "I think I should not care what happened. That was all. I wanted him to come to you, that you might tell us what he would be fit for."

"He would make a good soldier," said Mr. Ashford, smiling; "though there is an examination for that too."

"There are examinations for everything, I think," said Lottie, shaking her head mournfully; "that is the dreadful thing; and you see, Mr. Ashford, we are poor. He has not a penny, he must work for his living, and how is he to get started? That is what I am always saying. But what is the use of speaking? You know what boys are. Perhaps if I had been able to insist upon it years ago—but then I was very young too. I had no sense, any more than Law."

The Minor Canon was greatly touched. The evening dew got into his eyes—he stood by her in the soft summer darkness, wondering. He was a great deal older than Lottie—old enough to be her father, he said to himself; but he had no one to give him this keen impatient anxiety, this insight into what boys are. "Was there no one but you to insist upon it?" he said, in spite of himself.

"Well," said Lottie meditatively, "do gentlemen—generally—take much trouble about what boys are doing? I suppose—they have got other things to think of."

"You have not much opinion of men, Miss Despard," said the Minor Canon, with a half laugh.

"Oh, indeed I have!" cried Lottie; "why do you say that? I was not thinking about men—but only—— And then boys themselves, Mr. Ashford; you know what they are. Oh! I think sometimes if I could put some of me into him. But you can't do that. You may talk and

you may coax, and you may scold, and try every way—but what does it matter? If a boy won't do anything, what is to be done with him? That is why I wanted so much, so very much, to bring him to you."

"Miss Despard," said the Minor Canon, "you may trust me that if there is anything I can do for him I will do it. As it happens, I am precisely in want of some one to—to do the same work as another pupil I have. That would be no additional trouble to me, and would not cost anything. Don't you see? Let him come to me to-morrow and begin."

"Oh, Mr. Ashford," said Lottie, "I knew by your face you were kind—but how very, very good you are! But then," she added, sorrowfully, "most likely he could not do the same work as your other pupil. I am afraid he is very backward. If I were to tell you what he is doing you might know. He is reading Virgil—a book about as big as himself," she said, with a little laugh, that was very near crying. "Won't you sit down here?"

"Virgil is precisely the book my other pupil is doing," said Mr. Ashford, laughing too, very tenderly, at her small joke, poor child! while she made room for him anxiously on the bench. There they sat together for a minute in silence, all alone, as it might be, in the world, nothing but darkness round them, faint streaks of light upon the horizon, distant twinkles of stars above and homely lamps below. The man's heart softened strangely within him over this creature, who for all the pleasure she had, came out here, and apologised to him for coming alone. She who, neglected by everybody, had it in her to push forward the big lout of a brother into worthy life, putting all her delicate strength to that labour of Hercules—he felt himself getting quite foolish, moved beyond all his experiences of emotion, as, at her eager invitation, he sat down there by her side.

And as he did so, other voices and steps became audible among the trees, of somebody coming that way. Lottie had turned to him, and was about to say something, when the sound of the approaching voices reached them. He could see her start—then draw herself erect, close into the corner of the bench. The voices were loudly pitched, and attempted no concealment.

"La, Captain, how dark it is! Let's go home; mother will be looking for us," said one.

"My dear Polly," said the other—and though Mr. Ashford did not know Captain Despard, he divined the whole story in a moment as the pair brushed past arm-in-arm—"my dear Polly, your home will be very close at hand next time I bring you here."

Lottie said nothing—her heart jumped up into her throat, beating so violently that she could not speak. And to the Minor Canon the whole family story seemed to roll out like the veiled landscape before him as he looked compassionately at the girl sitting speechless by his side, while her father and his companion, all unconscious in the darkness, brushed against her, sitting there unseen under the shadowy trees.

Malay Life in the Philippines.

IMPATIENT to be already at the term of his voyage, the homeward-bound passenger is generally, nor least so at the hurried moment of final parting, under a spell that blots out from the scroll of his "Pleasures of Memory" the records of whole years, it may be, of happy residence in the lands that he is leaving; and all by the fresh contrast of lively anticipation of what, too often in fancy only, awaits him in the land, his native home, that lies before. True it is also that some shores there are—though to specify such would be invidious—which the longer one has sojourned on them, the keener the satisfaction one feels on leaving them without thought of return. Not so the "Isles of the East," the Philippines. Dull indeed must be his soul, unsympathetic his nature, who, whatever the hopes that may smile on him from the further vista of his journey's end, can stand as I do now on the deck of the Singapore-ward steamer, the little *Leite*, and see the forests and mountains of Luzon, Queen of the Eastern Isles, fade away into dim violet outlines on the fast receding horizon, without some wishful remembrance, some pang of longing regret.

It is not only that Nature—or shall we say "Hertha?"—so niggard often of her gifts, has here lavished them rather than bestowed; though indeed not the *Ægean*, not the West-Indian, not the Samoan, not any other of the fair island-clusters by which our terraqueous planet half atones for her dreary expanses of grey ocean and monotonous desert elsewhere, can rival in manifold beauties of earth, sea, sky, the Philippine Archipelago from the extreme northern verge of the Formosan channel to where the tepid equatorial wave sinks faint on the coral-reefs of Borneo; nor in all that Archipelago, lovely as it is through its entire extent, can any island vie with the glories of Luzon. Set out eastwards from Manila, the tropical Venice amid her labyrinth of estuaries and canals, daily ebbing and flowing to the titles of the vast harbour-gulf, the secure vestibule of the typhoon-swept China seas; thence pass inland between the broad shades of clustered bamboo and palm up the eddying Pasig river to where, apt starting-point of its romantic course, it issues from the wide freshwater lake of Bai, girdled by a hundred miles and more of varied, ever-fertile shore-line, and the cloud-capped peaks of the giant Mahahai range beyond; traverse the yellow cane-fields of the wealthy Laguna district to where, hid among the hills and coffee-groves of Batangas lies deep the blue cliff-encircled lake of Taal, and amid its waters the fairy islet where, from the miniature central volcano, a shift-

ing pennon of restless smoke and fire ever rises and spreads high over greensward and glossy tree; then across the rushing rivers, sounding waterfalls, and dark woods of Tayabas and the mid-chain, till, between slim tree-fern, and over forest-clad descent, the boundless Pacific opens out its sparkling blue; and right from the very breakers on the shore towers eight thousand feet in air the perfect volcano-cone of Albay, the fire-breathing marvel of these islands, as Fusiama of Japan.

I have taken, almost at chance, the first route that offered; Luzon has a hundred more, each different, and each as fair. Nor inferior in intrinsic beauty, though on a smaller scale, are the scenes that the comparatively lesser islands, such as Panay, Cebu, Samar, Negros, Leite, and others of names strange to the generality of European ears, have to show. More fortunate than their West-Indian sisters, no flat and chalky Barbados, no drought-stricken Antigua, no barren Virgin Island mars the perfection of the Philippine group; while Jamaica and Antigua themselves, those loveliest of the Antilles, must yield the palm of beauty to the mere average of the "Eastern Isles." Volcanic formation and soil, an abundant yearly rainfall, an equable climate, and the life-giving influences of the oceanic tropics have all combined here to do this, and it is marvellous in our, the beholders', eyes.

Marvellous in our eyes, impossible, not to be imaged, in the eyes of those who have only word-painting and imagination out of which to construct the view. Tropical scenery, be it of mountain or plain, forest or coast-line, lake or river, can no more be realised by those who have never seen it than colours by the blind, music by the deaf. A Kingsley attempts the picture, and behold a confused description of a Kew palm-house; a Michael Scott, and lo! the side-scenes of a theatre. The scientific accuracy of a Wallace, and of his compeers, if there be any worthy of the name, may supply a correct outline; but even this must be filled up by remembrance, or supplemented by engraving. Pity that for the Philippines themselves no word-limner of note exists, to my knowledge at least, except the coarse, narrow-souled Jagor, of whose book, or libel rather, it is enough to say that the letter-press and the sketches are worthy of each other, and each not likenesses but caricatures. The want however is one that, for the time at least, must remain unfulfilled; the subject, even were it accessible to my grasp, does not come within the scope of a writing like the present.

For, when all is said and done, the prime history of a country lies not in the land itself but in the inhabitants of the land; where they are unworthy of the beauties around them, the fairest scenery fails to charm; as, on the contrary, a noble people can cast a glamour of attractiveness over the dullest landscape. The barren rocks of Attica, the dreary plains of Rome, nay, the unsightly marshes of Holland are loved for their hero-children, while the gorgeous panoramas of Rio and Valparaíso, Yosemite gorges and Niagara chiefly suggest a feeling of dissatisfaction with the unequal inferiority of their vanished autochthones, or

present occupants. The chiefest, the almost exceptional spell of the Philippines is situate, not in lake or volcano, forest or plain, but in the races that form the bulk of the island population, the "Indians" as Spanish guilelessness of ethnography persists in misnaming them, the Malays of descent and fact.

I said "almost exceptional," because rarely is an intra-tropical people a satisfactory one to eye or mind; witness the average negro of Western Africa, the Carib of Southern America, the Sinhalee of Ceylon. Extreme heat, as extreme cold, are both, though in different ways, generally unfavourable to a successful development, physical or intellectual, of the human species. But this cannot be said of the Philippine Malays, who in bodily formation and mental characteristics alike may fairly claim a place not among the middling ones merely but almost the higher names inscribed on the world's national scale; and though not exactly a superior are eminently an estimable, pre-eminently an amiable race.

Of the Spaniards, the conquerors and administrators of this great Archipelago, in which however not ten thousand of their number have even a passing residence throughout its whole extent, of the English, an honourable, and in numbers as in wealth a not inconsiderable body, of the more numerous nor unimportant Chinese settlers domiciled here, and of that curious aboriginal remnant, the "Negritos," savages akin, it would seem, to the natives of Andaman, and like them shrinking, perhaps with prudential self-preserving instinct, from the contact of the "nobler," at any rate the stronger, races, no direct notice shall be taken here. Indeed of the eight millions, so runs the exactest though only approximate census, that inhabit the Philippines, Europeans, Chinese, all foreigners whosever taken together, do not make up a hundredth part; nor do the thinly scattered and unprolific Negritos add much to the extra-Malayan muster. Nor again, in a general sketch like this, do the varieties offered by the Philippino-Malayan population within itself require more than a passing indication. The chief are three, which correspond with tolerable geographical exactness to a triple division of the Archipelago into Northern, Central, and Southern. Thus, the Ilocan Malays occupy the North, the Tagals the centre, and the Visaians the south. Of these three sub-races, the first-named are the largest and sturdiest in physical build, but of lower mental average and less general adaptability than the two others; the second, a smaller-statured, darker-complexioned, and sinewy race, are distinguished above all others for energy of character, intelligence, and perseverance; the Visaians, graceful even to beauty in form and gentle in manner, differ little in natural capacity and endowments from the better sort of their congeners in Borneo. Derived from or ingrafted on these three main branches are many lesser sprays. Some, especially in North and Central Luzon, owe their differentiation, if reliance can be placed on the testimony of bodily lineaments and historical evidence combined, to a strong infusion of

Chinese, Formosan, and even Japanese blood; others, the Bicolis for instance on the eastern shores of the island, display an evidently Polynesian or Papuan admixture; while in the huge southerly island of Mindanao, scarcely inferior to Luzon itself in dimensions, a population closely resembling the Dyaks of Borneo is reported to exist. But the persistent, strongly-marked Malay type, whether absolutely pure as among the Visaians, or dashed with foreign strain, here more, here less, as is the case among the Tagals, Ilocans, and their sub-branches, predominates in all.

Once recognised, that type can never be mistaken; and it alone would, even in the absence of other testimony, suffice to assert the Mongolian clanship of the Malay. The rounded head, the small but expressive black eye, with its slight upward and outward turn, the straight dark hair, smooth skin, and small extremities, hands and feet, are not less distinctly the physical countersigns of Turanian origin, than are the tenacious purpose, the organising and yet more the cohesive power, the limited inventiveness, and the more than conservative immutability, its mental characteristics. Add to these a concentrated, never-absent self-respect, with—its natural result—a habitual self-restraint in word and deed, then only, and that very rarely, broken through when extreme provocation induces the transitory but fatal frenzy known as "amok," and in one deadly hour the Malay casts to the winds every feeling, every thought except that of bloody, indiscriminating revenge; add an inbred courtesy, equably diffused through all classes low or high, unflinching decorum, prudence, caution, quiet cheerfulness, ready hospitality, a correct though not an inventive taste, and a marked tendency to ancestral worship: such are, as described by the keenest of observers and most truthful of narrators, in his *Malay Archipelago*, the general attributes of the Malay race; and such are abundantly shared in by the inhabitants of the Philippines, though here they have undergone certain modifications, some favourable, some the reverse.

These modifications are, as might be anticipated, due principally to two important circumstances, the one, that the Philippine Malays have for now three full centuries been subject to European, *i.e.*, Spanish rule; the second, that they have for an equal length of time followed the religion of their conquerors, the Roman Catholic form of Christianity. Other things, climate, trade, wars, immigrations, and the like have no doubt had their effect, but in subordinate measure; the climate differing little from that of the not distant Equatorial islands and peninsula, while the isolated and isolating character of Spanish colonial policy has left comparatively little play to the action of trade or war; immigration has been considered already.

How far then has Malay nationality submitted to be modified by Spanish influence and institutions, how far has it, instinctively or deliberately, declined them? A visit to any one of the large villages or "pueblos" in the populous provinces of Pampangas, Laguna, or Batan-

gas, all of them within easy reach of the Government centre, Manila, will best help us to decide.

It is the morning—needless to say in a climate like this a clear and bright one—of the village patronal “Fiesta;” each village from Taal, with its sixty thousand inhabitants, down to the smallest hamlet of half a dozen families, has its “Fiesta,” one at least, not rarely two, in the course of the year, over and above the stated holiday-making of Sundays and the many other days marked for idleness and pleasure in the Philippine calendar. The open space, corresponding to our own village green, and here always in front of the church, is thronged with people, men, women, and children; while a number of the light native-constructed jaunting-cars, or “caramatas,” not unlike our own market carts, but canopied, and of slighter build, that have brought hither the more distant sharers in the day’s festivity, are waiting beside by scores, jumbled up with wickerwork waggons, wheel-less bamboo trucks, and two or three shabby open carriages of European construction, in which some wealthier native, or “mestizo,” *i.e.*, half-caste, family has arrived, in careless confusion.

A word about these “mestizos.” Not often the result of Spanish intermarriage, they are very commonly of semi-Chinese origin; a complexion fairer than the average, a greater breadth of forehead and feature, and a marked tendency to obesity, are their most ordinary distinctive marks. Intellectually they are generally somewhat the superiors of the unmixed natives around them. Their number, taken in comparison with that of the entire population, is not great; but their wealth and influence go far to make up this deficiency. I return to the Malays proper.

Thickly grouped before the church porch and around the building the men, lithe, middle-sized, and ruddy-brown of various shades, are dressed, if of the better sort, in loose shirts or blouses, home-manufactured from the finest fibre of the “abaca,” or Manila hemp, as the plant (really a sterile variety of the ordinary fruit-bearing banana) is called; or, more delicate yet, from “piña,” the pine-apple leaf texture, airy as the choicest lace, the peculiar workmanship of the Philippines. White, or light yellow, and interwoven sometimes with flower-patterns, more generally with brilliant stripes of Chinese silk, red, yellow, green, or blue, the “baro,” or blouse, is an essentially national dress, though in the neighbourhood of Manila modified too often into an uncouth resemblance of a European shirt. Beneath it a pair of white or light-coloured trousers are belted round the waist; the feet, usually bare, or protected by sandals at most, are on occasions like this not seldom encased in patent-leather boots of Spanish fashion; the head is protected by the “salacot,” a round, mushroom-like hat, of about a foot in diameter, close plaited in gray and black intersecting patterns of tough “nito” or liana fibre; the circumference tastefully ornamented with silver bands and flowerets, an excellent and picturesque sunshade, ill exchanged, though, happily,

but seldom, for the European hat of silk or straw. The poorer classes wear a like dress, but of coarser materials, in which red or orange commonly predominate, and on the head a "salacot" devoid of ornament. But while the men's attire, though national in the main, shows occasional tokens of European influence, the women, with wise conservatism, retain their graceful Malay costume unaltered as of old. Wrapped in the many-coloured folds of the silken "saya," or "sarong," and over it a second, but narrower, waistcloth, also of silk, reaching down to the knees, and dark in hue; her breast and shoulders covered with delicate "piña" texture, while the matchless abundance of her raven hair ripples from under a white snooded kerchief far down her back, not seldom to her very heels, a Malay woman could hardly, even did she wish it, improve on the toilette bequeathed by her ancestors. Silver or gold ornaments are not much in feminine use. It is true that the Malay type of face is generally too flat for regular beauty, and the eye, though larger than the Chinese, is seldom full-sized; but many of the younger women are decidedly pretty, a few lovely, and a habitual look of smiling good-nature goes far to render pleasing the less nature-favoured faces. Their complexion is a clear brown, sometimes hardly darker than that of an ordinary South European brunette. Children, absolutely naked, or with a light and scanty shirt for sole covering, mix fearlessly but quietly in the throng; early trained by precept and example to good manners, they show less disposition to noise and mischief than is ordinary elsewhere at their age.

Such are the festival-makers. The church-buildings, including a spacious presbytery, are generally the design and construction of the parish priest himself, who has in them maintained a traditional adaptation of the "renaissance" style of his own Spanish peninsula. The frequency of earthquakes in this volcanic region counsels low side walls, flanked by ponderous buttresses; a massive octangular bell-tower, with indications of good taste and architectural feeling in its proportions and details, is usually the best feature of the whole.

Within the church the rites and ceremonies of the day—a Malay sermon delivered by one or other of the officiating priests excepted—are much what they might be in any small provincial town of Spain itself. But the music, contributed by a native brass band, is not European merely, but, the most of it, operatic. The "Gloria" is accompanied by an inspiring air of the "Trovatore," the "Credo" cheered by a melodious adaptation from the "Barbiere," and the host elevated to a passionate outburst of the "Traviata." But whatever may be thought of the suitability of the music to the occasion and place, it meets beyond a doubt all the aesthetic requirements of the worshippers, and is well executed besides. Not a village of any importance throughout the length and breadth of the Philippines but has its band of carefully selected and expensive brass instruments, and skilled players to match; for, next to his fighting-cock, of which more anon, music is the dearest

solace of the Philippine Malay ; and the ex-bandmasters of the numerous native regiments here maintained by the Spaniards are always ready to hire out their services as professors of the art wherever wanted. Of the original native music, prior in date to the Spanish conquest, little now remains ; its connection with an older Paganism, perhaps patriotism, having caused it to be proscribed and carefully put down by the later clergy ; two such airs I had however a chance opportunity of hearing ; they were of a sentimental and somewhat pathetic character.

Inside and without the church decorations testify to Mariolatry, Hagiolatry, and the entire system habitually branded by those who wish to give it a bad name as "idolatry," "man-worship," "creature-worship," and the like, here carried out to its extremest limits, and constituting in practice nine-tenths, or rather more, of the religion of the land. It is a religion admirably adapted to the requirements of the people, and proportionately beneficial. Ancestor-worship in one form or other has ever been, as Mr. Fergusson correctly remarks, and yet is, the favourite expression of religious feeling among Turanian races ; and the Malays, themselves the southmost branch of the great ethnical tree, are no exceptions to the rule. Here in the Philippines they have, with the easy pliancy in such matters that once covered the equatorial island-group with Brahminical temples, and facilitated the spread of Buddhism among their cousins of China and Japan, adopted without questioning the Catholic-Christian system, and placed its mythico-historical virgins, saints, and martyrs at the head of the unseen kingdom already tenanted by their own proper ancestors and relatives, till they now rejoice in the possession of a well-stocked Olympian Valhalla, sufficient to their sympathies and hopes. Engrafted thus on a genuine indigenous stem, the more recent and exotic religion, while retaining much of its own peculiar form in flower and fruit, derives its local energy and development from the unfailing sap of the national mind ; no longer foreign but native, believed in sooner than taught, an integral part of daily life, not a plastered-on addition, it affords so far an absolute contrast to the "musical bank currency" of the Erewhons of our age, and is itself a not inconsiderable part of the genuine circulating medium of the Philippines. Hence as a social bond, a humanising influence, an effective sanction, a promoter of friendly intercourse, of right, of love even, a poetry amid life's commonplace, a balm—ideal but not inefficacious—of the wounds and bruises of fact, Christianity has, it would seem, rarely been more advantageous to its followers than here, where it can scarce be distinguished from a well-regulated, genial Asiatic Paganism ; a riddle harder to read in appearance than in reality.

This is not the place for me to enter on the perilous field of the strange abnormal practices and beliefs, survivals of a far older creed, that subsist and smoulder on throughout the Archipelago, and even within the immediate neighbourhood of Manila itself, its convents and cathedral, beneath the Christianised surface, though rarely obtruding themselves

on European observation: Cybelian priesthoods, Cotyttian rites, repressed but not obliterated, and to which the past history of other nations, perhaps the present, offers many a parallel. Enough that such things are; their investigation, though of deep anthropological interest, is foreign to my present scope, which extends only over the usual, not the exceptional, the recognised, not the concealed and disavowed phases of Philippine society and life.

Mass is ended; the "Royal March" of Spanish celebrity has dismissed the congregation; and while we stand a little apart and watch the bright-coloured crowds issuing dense but orderly from the church portal, the native "Gubernadoreillo," or "Capitan," the Headman of the village community, observes and approaches us. The ensigns of his office are few, and those chiefly Spanish; a short jacket of black cloth, worn, unbecomingly enough, over the indispensable blouse, a thin staff tipped with silver or gold, sometimes—though, heaven be praised, rarely—a European hat, distinguish the great man. Probably he himself is forty years old or more, but his general appearance, features, form, and bearing, would designate him at first sight for a lad of barely twenty; and indeed the closest inspection may not rarely fail in determining his real age. This extraordinary semblance of juvenility, prolonged far into middle life, is not merely due to the beardless face, where a slight mustachio is commonly enough the only hair-growth even in advanced life, but more to the smooth, smiling, unworn features, where neither care nor passion seem to have left a trace, and partly to the uprightness of stature and well-proportioned roundness of limb maintained to the very confines of senility—a fitting exterior to the calm, unexcitable, moderated character within, and not unparalleled among the Chinese, Japanese, and other Turanian tribes. It is almost a pity that early and frequently recurring maternity too generally deprives—though not un-compensating in its kind for what it takes—the Malay women of a physical advantage more to the purpose in their sex than in the male.

Every village, large or small, is headed by its "Capitan," a native of the place or district, elected in accordance with immemorial custom for two years' office by the villagers themselves, subject, of course, to the approbation, seldom withheld, of the "Alcalde," or Spanish Provincial Governor. For the Spaniards wisely enough preferred at their conquest to maintain and continue in most matters of detail the already existing village, or "Barangai" organisation, rather than to supersede it by novel systems of their own; a matter in which they showed themselves to be better colonisers than, for instance, the French. But the post of "Capitan," however important, is scarcely an object of rural ambition, as its responsibilities are at least equal to its dignity; while the expenses which custom or duty has rendered obligatory on its holder are too often in excess of its emoluments, legal or not. Hence the not unfrequent "nolo episcopari"—that is, its Tagal equivalent—of a newly elected "Capitan."

Of even higher authority in every village than the "Capitan" himself is the "Cura," or parish priest. He is in most instances a Spaniard by birth, and enrolled in one or other of the three great religious orders, Augustinian, Franciscan, or Dominican, established by the conquerors in these islands. But his birthplace, complexion, and habit apart, he is ordinarily as much, sometimes in a manner more, of a native in his sympathies and turn of mind than the natives themselves. This is quite natural. Bound for life to the land of his adoption, with no social, no domestic tie, no anticipated home-return to hold him back from identifying himself with those amongst whom his days are henceforth to be passed, his bones at last to rest, having every interest, the highest as the lowest, in common with the sheep of his pasture, whose fleeces he cannot but desire to guard against all other shears but his own—and, to do him justice, his own do not shear very close—he commonly becomes, and that in the truest and best sense of the term, a very father to his people, and finds in their reverence and affection motive enough to encourage him in continuing to deserve the title. To clerical government, paradoxical as the statement may sound in modern European ears, the Philippine islands owe, more than to anything else, their internal prosperity, the Malay population its sufficiency and happiness. This it is that again and again has stood a barrier of mercy and justice between the weaker and the stronger race, the vanquished and the victor; this has been the steady protector of the native inhabitants, this their faithful benefactor, their sufficient leader and guide. With the "Cura" for father, and the "Capitan" for his adjutant, a Philippine hamlet feels and knows little of the vexations inseparable from direct and foreign official administration; and if under such a rule "progress," as we love to term it, be rare, disaffection and want are rarer still.

Occasionally the "Cura" is a native by birth, for though excluded by invariable custom and monastic disciplinarianism from the "regular," Malays are admitted readily enough into the ranks of the "secular" priesthood. But, while pointedly rejecting as the figments of a malevolent imagination the calumnies of Jagor and his like against the morals of the Philippine clergy in general, and the native portion of it in particular, I must admit that the results of Malay ordination are seldom as satisfactory as could be desired. The Malays have, in their authentic condition, no regular priesthood, as we understand the word, of their own, nor is their temperament suited to it. The office is accordingly best filled among them by foreigners, such at least as religious orders and monasticism, nor least those of the Spanish type, can supply.

But we have almost forgotten our "Capitan," who, with genuine Malay courtesy and self-restraint, has been all this while awaiting in silence and respectful expectation the opportunity of addressing us. This he now does, placing his house at our disposal for the day, and pressingly inviting us to take share in the promised festivities of the evening. Knowing as we do that the house he so liberally offers us will be

crowded with visitants of all kinds, on ceremonious compliments or indirect business, we decline the first half of his offer, and request for ourselves some quieter shelter till the evening hour. He complies, and passes us over to one of his wealthier friends, who immediately proceeds to take on himself the duties of host, by vacating in our favour all the best rooms of his own abode, and converting himself and his family into extemporised cooks and servants during our stay.

The house, though ranged in what constitutes the main street of the village, stands by itself; no Malay who can possibly avoid it ever constructing his home in immediate contact with that of another family. The garden which surrounds it, fenced in with wattle, and thick-set with dragon's-blood plants, purple-blossomed creepers, red coral-plants, and white star-like flowerets, makes a pretty show; betel-palms and giant bananas shade the enclosure. Raised on thick pieces of stone or wood to a height of six or eight feet from the ground, the house enjoys an almost free circulation of the outside air beneath its inhabited apartments on the first floor; an arrangement which may possibly be a survival of lacustrine constructions and delta-inhabiting ancestors, but which, now observed throughout the Philippines in the driest up-country heights not less than among the dampest marsh-lands, contributes not a little to popular cleanliness and health. The house itself, that is, the upper story, is entered by a wide staircase leading into a broad sort of open passage, called the "cahida," facing the street; its windows are composed of small square panes of thin mother-of-pearl, produce of the Sooloo seas, arranged in lattice-work horizontally or diagonally; in this cool verandah-like passage the family usually enjoy their leisure, receive visitors, and exchange gossip with the neighbours. Behind it is a large square central room, all doors and windows, the latter also of mother-of-pearl in sliding frames; here are massed together the costliest articles of furniture owned by the household—chairs, tables, wardrobes, and the rest. As might be expected of a people whose principal constructive material is wood, the Malays display considerable skill and taste in carved work: even the outside decorations round and between the windows and along the string-courses of their buildings are often of much beauty; while indoors their cabinets and sideboards, well-proportioned and elaborately intricate in decorative finish, might not rarely furnish models to be copied or envied by the upholsterers of Europe. The narrow interspaces along the walls of the principal room are decorated with coloured prints, generally Spanish, devotional or historical, as the case may be; and not rarely boast of family portraits, executed by native artists, with all the detail accuracy and all the stiffness and want of perspective that a Chinese could accomplish. Glass globes, red and blue, mixed with gay lamps, and perhaps a European chandelier, hang from the ceiling, and a small tinsel-decorated altar or oratory, the Penates of the family, commonly occupies a corner of the apartment. The doors around open into bedrooms, and a bamboo-made passage leads

off to the bathroom and kitchen, which is also on the first floor, but at a little distance from the rest of the house.

Abundance of light, though tempered by the semi-opacity of the pearl-shell windows, plenty of fresh air, as much bright colour and ornament as can be had, and scrupulous cleanliness, the broad floor planks being daily scrubbed with plantain-leaves to a mirror-like polish, and everything dusted twice in the day, such are the chief characteristics of the interior of a Malayo-Philippine house; and amid conditions of the sort, the general health and longevity of the inhabitants cease to surprise. Outside, the appearance of the many-gabled palm-thatched roofs at every variety of pitch, the widely projecting eaves, the bamboo-inter-lacements, and carved timber-work of the walls, the chequered panes and little balconies here and there, is very picturesque, and has a kind of Swiss-cottage look that harmonises well with the local background of hill and forest.

I pass over the ceremonies of reception, and the hospitality that follows; both are in the main identical with those practised elsewhere in the non-Europeanised East, with the difference that here the women of the house take a more prominent part in welcome and entertainment than is customary in Syria, Arabia, or Western Asia generally. When not under Mahometan influences, Malays draw the line of demarcation between the sexes but slightly; and Christianity naturally tends to efface rather than to deepen the division. To this circumstance, more perhaps than to any other, I am inclined to attribute the manifest superiority in mind, and even in body, of the average Philippine Malay over his Mahometan kinsmen, as the latter are found in Sumatra, the Peninsula, the Sooloo Archipelago, and adjoining regions.

That the adoption of Islam may be, and in fact is, a real benefit and an uplifting to savage tribes, amongst whom the lowest and most brutalising forms of fetichism would else predominate, does not admit of doubt. Anthropophagy, human sacrifices, and other kindred horrors, have thus been banished by Mahometan teaching from whole tracts of Africa; and so far is well. But not less does experience show that, sooner or later, the tribe, the nation that casts in its lot with Islam, is stricken as by a blight; its freshness, its plasticity disappear first, then its vigour, then its reparative and reproductive power, and it petrifies or perishes. With the abstract and theoretical merits of Monotheism or Polytheism, Islam or Christianity, I have nothing to do; but this much is certain, that within the circle of the Philippine Archipelago itself—not to seek examples further away—the contrast between the Mahometan villages of the southernmost islands and the Christian ones elsewhere, is very remarkable, nor by any means favourable to the former.

For a satisfactory explanation of the problem before us, there is no need for recurring to causes, if such there be, hid in the extra-mundane and unknown. The reason is near to seek. Family life, family ties, family affections, these form the only true, stable, and at the same time

expansive basis for communities, states, empires even; and that these may, and actually do, co-exist after a fashion with a vigorous profession of Mahometanism no one who has experimental knowledge of Turkish or Arab populations can possibly deny. They exist; but even when at their best and strongest are always cramped, stunted, and hindered their full growth and development by the forced demarcation between the sexes, the sanctioned polygamy, the over-facility of divorce, and the other social mistakes interwoven whether by the hand of the Prophet himself, or rather, as with Sprengel I incline to believe, by that of the narrow-minded and ascetic Omar, into the very texture of Islam. Nowhere are family bonds closer drawn, family affections more enduring than among the Malay races, and nowhere, in consequence, is whatever weakens or distorts them more injurious. Hence a Malay Mahometan is a contradiction, an anomaly, a failure, much as a Hindoo Christian or a European Buddhist might be. The system does not suit him, nor he the system. Not so the Malay of the Philippino-Christian type. His family, as that of his Chinese or Japanese cousins, moderate polytheists like himself, is a pleasing sight, much subordination and little constraint, unison in gradation, liberty not licence. Orderly children, respected parents, women subject but not suppressed, men ruling but not despotic, reverence with kindness, obedience in affection, these form a loveable picture, nor by any means a rare one in the villages of the Eastern Isles.

Our mid-day meal, the components of which differ little from those of a West Indian or a Bombay up-country *menu*, with cookery to match, is over. Follows, for those who desire it, a dreamy half-siesta of cigars and the green coolness of rustling bamboo-sprays outside the window, with glimpses of a shining river and light outrigger canoes gliding over it just seen betwixt the leaves; a purple volcano-peak and a faint blue mountain range beyond. And now the white perpendicular glare of noon is slanting into mellowness, and we stroll out of doors for a survey of the village, keeping whenever we can under the shade of the thick-planted garden trees, mango, palm, orange, lanzon, santol, medlar, fifty more, each with its own peculiar foliage and fruit, pleasant to the eye and good to eat, a survival of Eden. The villagers' houses, some large, some small, wood or bamboo, two-storied or one, mere huts or spacious dwellings, according to the fortunes of the inmates, are jotted here and there in an unsymmetrical row among the trees with utter disregard of proportionate dimensions; but all have a comfortable, a cosy look, suggestive of sufficiency; many of them, white painted with stripes green or blue, rarely red, and occasionally a flower pattern or fanciful scroll-work to enliven them more, show an attempt at decoration; others are content with the pale yellow of the split and interlaced bamboo that forms their walls; the roofing is grey palm-thatch. On this festival-day lamps are placed ready for lighting at every window, and over every doorway, flower-garlands hang between, and frequent arches of cane, festooned with white or red cloth, and hung with lanterns of more colours

than Joseph's coat, span the road. We have left behind us the white church and "convents," the Capitan's many-windowed house, the guard-station, where a couple of brown young policemen, natives, of course, but attired in Spanish military uniform, languidly keep what courtesy may name watch, and now we have before us a large wattled building, surrounded by a wide enclosure, and with extensive galleries in front and on the sides; the central thatch roof towers dome-like above the rest. Several natives clad, for the day is yet hot, in the gauziest and most transparent of hemp blouses, or absolutely naked to the waist, are entering the crowded gate-way, others are issuing from it, like bees about the mouth of a hive; all is animation, almost—so far as the word is compatible with Malay composure—excitement. It is the village cock-pit, the great afternoon resort of Sundays and holidays as observed throughout this entire region of the world, from Penang to the confines of New Guinea; in the Philippines most of all.

Whether the Malays, as some writers assert, learnt cock-fighting from the Spaniards, or the Spaniards, as others opine, from the Malays, I will not attempt to decide, the historical problem is too complicated. But from whichever the origin of the sport, it is certain that the zeal for it that nowadays glows in every native breast from Luzon to Mindanao, let alone the rest of Malaysia, is such as might rejoice the soul of a Windham himself. Rich or poor, it would be hard to find a Malay householder, Ilocan, Tagal, Visayan, or whatever his tribe and island in the great Spain-governed Archipelago, who does not rear at least as many fighting-cocks as his means permit, and too often rather more; nor is it wholly a calumny which asserts that the owner is wont to tend his bird better and love it dearer than any other living object of his household belongings, wife and children not excepted. Stories are current of a respectable Malay paterfamilias escaping from amid the ruins of his burning home—no rare occurrence in these villages of wood and thatch, especially during the dry season—and bearing carefully shielded in his arms his favourite, scarce-rescued bird, while his wife and children are left behind to shift for themselves unheeded as best they may. Exaggerations, I am bound to say, but, I also fear, "founded on fact."

We enter the precincts—the admission fee is a mere trifle, and a cheap cigar, if no coin be at hand, is current payment for this and for many other minor costs, to see the sport. It has been often described; the chief thing worthy of remark is that a heel of either fighting bird is armed with a sharp razor-like steel blade, near two inches in length; a deadly weapon, that materially abridges the duration of the combat between the feathered rivals. Once at close quarters, the rest is an affair of seconds rather than of minutes; at least I never saw it otherwise. It is a somewhat brutal amusement after all, and so far lowers the Malays to the level of our own ancestors some three or four generations ago. But the really worst picture of a Philippine cock-fight is the betting universal among the spectators of the game; the sums staked are often

very high, and their payment, which is rarely shirked, not uncommonly involves the ruin of the loser. Thus the cock-pit too frequently proves the first step in an Avernian descent leading down to prison and crime. Here we have in truth before us the Malay "turf," though Malay civilisation has not yet widened enough to include within its circle "welchers" and their kin, nor, I think, ever will. Self-respect, a feeling hardly ever absent from the national character, would alone suffice to forbid it. The same self-respect displays itself too, even on occasions like the present, when, if ever, it might be supposed weak or wanting, in other ways. Look round the crowded circles, where several hundreds of half-naked spectators of every age are close packed together in the broiling afternoon heat, and acted on by all the combined influences of gambling, emulation, and the sport itself; not a word, not a sound is to be heard, not a gesture to be seen approaching to "rowdyism;" not a hint of disorder or disturbance. Passions, strong ones too, certainly, are at work; vice in many forms can hardly fail to be present and busy in gatherings of the kind; but no vulgarity, no visible or audible coarseness are there. This is partly due to the comparative absence of intoxication; for "tuba," the fermented palm-juice that does almost universal duty for beer or spirits among the Philippine "natives," is rarely drunk in excess, and even were it, could hardly prove more effective than, in Dr. Johnson's estimation, claret itself. But the chief order preserver is the stable equilibrium of the native mind, the decorum born of moderation. A Malay may be a profligate, a gambler, a thief, a robber, a murderer; he is never a "cad;" that type, as well as the "rough"—the death-bed abhorrence of the great Queen of England's Renaissance—is a development of the "higher," that is, of the more muscular, more energetic, more pushing, more complicated races; and his absence from amid the equable diffusion of courtesy and self-restraint that stamp the average Turanian, is alone no small compensation for the inferiority, if inferiority there be, of the gentler, calmer, less aggressive, also less progressive tribes. The adjuncts of an Epsom grand stand, or a Dutch "kermis," may make one occasionally regret the less civilised but better-mannered crowd of a Philippine "fiesta."

Quitting the equivocal attractions of the cock-pit, we engage a "caramata," one of the light covered jaunting-cars before described; the slim, scantily attired jarvey, sun-sheltered by his mushroom-like straw hat, and with somewhat of the professional humour of the Wellers of the earth on his boyish face, flogs into a canter the rough grass-fed ponies of the vehicle, and away we go, passing under a highly decorated bamboo gateway, built up right across the village entry, and side-doors for foot-farers, the whole extemporised for the day's festival with a prodigality of material and labour, seemingly out of all proportion with the means of the constructors. And now we are on the high road, where the ditches on either side, and the spreading trees planted at short intervals for welcome shade, are almost the only indications that it is a road at all in the European sense of the term. Uneven, irregular, now rock, now

mere soil rising in unmanageable hummocks, or deep-scored into ruts and holes, a day's rain, as rain is in the tropics, would render it next to impassable. But we will suppose our excursion to be made in the dry or the half-dry season, that is at any date between October and July, best if in February or March before the summer heats, too intense for average European endurance, have set in. Be our way then through the lowlands, rice districts, sugar districts; or be it, if more varied scenery attract us, amid the plantations of coffee, cacao, or "abaca," of the hilly grounds. The rice-fields are well watered with careful distribution; Mr. Fergusson does not err in assigning the palm of irrigative skill to the Turanian races; the cane patches, though small in individual extent, wave dense and yellow; the coffee-bushes, unlike the cruelly mutilated stumps that do duty for them in Ceylon, spread far their straggling boughs berry-laden; the broad leaves of the shapely "abaca" plantain glisten emerald in the sun. But to all one feature is common, or rather all are distinguished by the peculiar absence of one feature, rarely missed elsewhere in the colonial tropics, namely, large estates. Rice lands, cane lands, coffee lands, hemp lands alike, all are divided and subdivided; and however vast the green carpet of cultivation may be in its total extent, the irregular patches that make it up are not less infinite in number than capricious in shape. Equally remarkable is the absence of large agricultural establishments, buildings, factories, store-houses, and the like. Is that diminutive shed, with a few low heaps of crushed cane refuse about it, a sugar-mill? can that narrow thatch-covering be a coffee depôt? that rudely constructed hand-worked contrivance just seen through the plantain stems a hemp-preparing machine? Yet such in truth it is, such they are; and though specimens of somewhat more dignified dimensions may occasionally be found, they are rare exceptions, and may be counted, the Archipelago through, on the fingers; while the grandest of them would sink into mere insignificance if transferred to Demerara or Martinique, Australia, or Ceylon.

Large proprietors, in the accepted signification of the phrase, are rare in the Philippines, where "every rood of ground maintains its man;" and little room accordingly is left for the expansion of single estates. Little room, and, luckily, as we shall see, for the prosperity no less than for the happiness of the "natives," little agglomerated capital. Spanish capitalists here are none; and other European proprietors of land and field, from a variety of causes useless here to discuss, none worth mentioning also. Mestizos, that is half-breeds, generally of Chino-Malay origin, are the most bulky estate-owners; and the lands and fortunes they not rarely amass into one, seldom hold together beyond a life-time, but soon obey the Eastern law of subdivision between heirs, and fall asunder. The while far the greater part of the soil is in the hands of the Malays themselves, who, easily contented, and not much given to anxieties about fortune-making and the future, till each his little plot, and make their bargains for disposing of the produce with the Chinese

or semi-Chinese middlemen; by whom again it is transferred wholesale to European, chiefly British merchants, and so reaches the coast and the cargo ships.

Votaries, if such yet there be, of the "Manila cheroots," so sadly deteriorated of late years, may wonder here that no tobacco-growing district has been brought under our retrospective view. But these districts are almost wholly restricted to the northernmost region of the Archipelago, and are besides so exceptional in every respect, that they ought to be treated of, if at all, apart from any others. Their landscape is, I regret to say, a gloomy one, and I willingly refrain from the contrast of its sombre tints with the bright and cheerful hues around us to-day; they are proper to nine-tenths at least of Philippine territory, and peculiar to it.

In most, if not all other intertropical colonies—the West Indies for example—the administration and enterprise alike are both of them essentially European, the labour alone native. In these "Eastern Isles," on the contrary, the Spaniards, content with administration, have left enterprise no less than labour to the natives themselves. The result is a very remarkable one; we have already to a certain extent seen it exemplified in detail, and shall see more; let us now pause a moment to gather it up in one comprehensive view.

Eight million natives, more or less, inhabit the Philippines; and of this vast aggregate the principal, almost the only sustenance, morning, noon, and eve is rice. And what famine is, how frequent, how disastrous, how overwhelming among a rice-subsisting population, the annals of Madras, Orissa, Ceylon, Bengal, have too often taught us. A calamity that, it would seem, no foresight can avert, to which no remedy can suffice. And yet, in the Philippine Archipelago, scarcity even is of rare occurrence, famine unknown; in the worst of years hardly a sack of grain has to be imported; in average seasons the land has enough for her children, all swarming as they are, and to spare. More still, after deducting the entire vast extent of soil and amount of labour devoted exclusively to this one staff of local life, enough remains of both to supply the export trade with an equivalent of four to six millions sterling in sugar, coffee, hemp, tobacco, and all the other varied products of tropical agriculture. "Enough and over, enough for ourselves, and over and above for our neighbours," is the fact-spoken motto of the colony; and of how many other European colonies can this be said?—of any?

Whence then this abiding sufficiency? what is the want-repelling charm? Is it a better climate? a richer soil? a more regular and abundant rainfall than other island-groups can boast? To some extent, perhaps; but such advantages though they may contribute towards well-being, cannot of themselves effect it. Or is it greater skill, greater energy, greater aptitude for labour in the natives themselves. The Malay, like other children of the tropics, limits his labour by the measure of his requirements, and that measure is narrow indeed. Not so much what

they have, but rather what they have not, makes the good fortune of the Philippines, the absence of European enterprise, the absence of European capital. A few European capitalist settlers, a few giant estates, a few central factories, a few colossal money-making combinations of organised labour and gainful produce, and all the equable balance of property and production, of ownership and labour, that now leaves to the poorest cottager enough, and yet to the total colony abundance to spare, would be disorganised, displaced, upset; to be succeeded by day labour, pauperism, government relief, subscriptions, starvation. Europe, gainful insatiate Europe would reap the harvest; but to the now happy, contented, satiate Philippine Archipelago, what would remain but the stubble, but leanness, want, unrest, misery? The garden was the garden of Eden; its indwellers must needs hearken to the serpent counsel, develop its resources, and be themselves cast forth from sufficient, unappreciated happiness, never to regain it, never return.

O balmy life-giving breezes of the wide Pacific, with enjoyment in every flutter of your wings! O golden glories of the evening sun-god, ere yet he withdraws from view within his cloud-built palace of amber and crimson, reared on the deep immensity of blue! long be yours to range and reign over the waving emerald of the parcelled rice-field, the unpruned freedom of the fruit-clustered bough, the bannered flaglets of the yellowing cane-patch, the green glisten of the plantain-grove, the triumph of the stately garden-palm, while frequent amid them, each sheltering its contented owner-peasant and the children-inheritors of the land, rise the little thatched cottages, undwarfed by the vast constructions of overshadowing capital, unsmirched by Western smoke and enginery; while the fruit-bearing land smiles her bounty on her unorphaned children, and the children yet claim for their own the native bosom of their own land. Birthright ill sold for any counter-exchange of elusive gain; Eden unequally bartered for the whole world of unrest and striving that seethes and struggles without the island bounds. Long may those bounds remain, long may they keep at bay the gods of the stranger, the price of the alien, the progress that is retrocession, the science that strips to nakedness, the energy that consumes and destroys, the greed of all-organising, all-devouring capital, the skilled force insatiate of its slaves, the iron and the gold. And thou, cherished vision of southern fancy, virgin-goddess of crowded shrines, Guadalupe or Rosario, Lady of Refuge, Mother and Queen of men, revive in this encroaching, all-absorbing age thy ancient legends of dangers repelled, invaders baffled, protected island-shrines; and shroud in thy own mystic veil from the profane gaze of enterprise, from the intruding crews of progress, that fatal gift of beauty, fatal to so many of her sisters, the beauty of the Eastern sea-nymph who clings to thy knees, nestles at thy feet, secure in thy shelter, happy beyond desire in herself and thee.

A few minutes of brightest twilight and the warm star-spangled night calls forth the entire village, together with the flocking crowds

who have come from the adjoining hamlets, in whatever they can muster of gayest ornament, silver or silk, to take their share in the "Fiesta" of the district. From the pillared church front and the massive octangular bell-tower close by, now illuminated by countless lamps from base to summit, the graceful bamboo-constructed arches, flung at short intervals across the main road-way of the village, and round by a complete circuit to the church porch again, form a glowing avenue of coloured lanterns and transparent patterns and devices, beneath which the patronal procession is to pass. And here it comes, in two endless streams, men and boys in their fluttering blouses on one side of the road, women and girls in close-girded silks on the other, all bareheaded, and with lighted tapers in their hands, talking, laughing, and merry, but great or small alike orderly and decorous in word and gesture. The foremost are a good way already ahead; and now behold a painted tinsel-crowned image, the Baptist it may be, attired in half-military uniform, or S. Francis in his religious garb, or a Virgin-Martyr, diademed and bedizened, with real jewels of price, diamonds, rubies, emeralds, glittering amid the coloured ribbons and rags, borne along the midway between the files, high on a bedecked bamboo litter, amid a blaze of tapers that lights up as it passes the deep foliage on either side and overhead into a semblance of day. Then more processionists; and after a moderate interval a second demi-god, S. Michael it may be, or S. Peter perhaps, or any other worshipped ideal of the Catholic Pantheon, comes swaying along, more gorgeous than its predecessor; and yet a third, and a fourth; and all the while, with occasional halts for gathering up stragglers, or clearing the way ahead, the procession moves on, a double serpent of brilliancy, and thickens as it moves; while from amid the illuminated houses, and dense gardens off the road, rockets shoot up their irregular greetings far into the starry silence overhead. But now the crowd is at its closest, and the black official jackets of the village dignitaries on one side, and the brightest silks of their long-tressed helpmates on the other, usher in a gigantic litter, slow borne on the shoulders of the stoutest, stateliest devotees; where, throned amid a blazing pyramid of tapers, herself a blaze of tinsel and diamonds,

Our Lady comes smiling and smart,

With a pink gauze gown over spangles, and seven swords stuck in her heart;

or some other avatar likeness of Heaven's Queen; while all around swells the devout murmur of venerative triumph; close follows the village band, reinforced from the nearer hamlets, as it blares out its liveliest march; and "*O Dea certe,*" in its Malay equivalent, fills every heart, and bursts from every tongue. "Idolatri! rank idolatri!" say you. And if so, what then? And what, I would fain know, is any worship, any rite man can offer to the Unknown Majesty, the Unknown Love but idolatri, whatever the symbol, whatever the expression? Image, picture, statue, book, wood, stone, word, written scroll, printed paper, idea, thought itself, what are they all in the great God-poised balance but symbols, but idols? Be

content then, my friend, with your own favourite idol, the image of your choice; bow before it, set it up never so high on the throne of your own making, it is well; but sneer not at, seek not to pull down the idols of your brethren; perhaps they are no further from the Infinite Truth they purport to symbolise than your own, like them finite too. Respect, though you participate not; give honour, though you refuse worship.

The procession winds on; and all the while a desultory firing off of rockets and bursting of crackers detains not a few of the faithful at its starting point, the village centre, the green before the church, till, after an hour and more of slow circuit, the crowd, tapers, images, band and all, have re-entered the temple; and a solemn benediction, bestowed with all the efficacy that bells, books, candles, music, vestments, and unquestioning belief can give, dismisses the worshippers to festivity and amusement; which, for the wealthier householders, means several hours of supper and dancing, song and cigars in their own dwellings or those of their friends. Copious the supper, lavish the hospitality. What the night's entertainment will cost our worthy "Capitan," whose brilliantly illuminated "sala" is crowded with at least sixty hungry Malay guests, and thrice the number of uninvited spectators, come to admire the chandeliers, the decorations, the musicians, and the dancers, often to join company with the last, and to partake in the unlimited refreshments set forth on the sideboards, I shudder to think. Perhaps so does he; but, at any rate, no outward sign of disquiet mars his composure, as with an unvarying smile of gratified hospitality he goes through the endless courtesies of a reception-night.

But the chief attraction of this period of the evening, and one to which even supper and dancing, roast pig and polka must yield in Malay estimation, is to be found out of doors, on the village square, not far from the church and the Capitan's own house. It is a spacious booth, the framework of bamboo, gaily draped and festooned with cloth white and red, and surmounted by flags; within is a raised stage, side-scenes, and curtains, the whole brilliantly lighted up, and open in front to the admiring crowd that will stand here and gaze for hours; on either side, reaching to some distance, rows of improvised boxes and seats, tier above tier, theatre-fashion, and hung with bright colours, give the more "fashionable" spectators view on the central stage. But boxes, seats, standing-room, all are gratis to-night, when the village itself defrays the expenses of the common amusement. The drama is a Malay one, and the characters numerous; kings, queens, chieftains, damsels, grave counsellors, nobles, soldiers, and so forth, all in the gayest dresses of Malayan type. The plot is generally an adaptation of some Biblical story, that of David and Jonathan being the most often selected, sometimes it is taken from the Hagiology; occasionally from semi-historical records of wars and reigns. The dialogue is commonly in verse; the acting more energetic than Hamlet might have approved; the music, abundantly bestowed as accompaniment, tolerable. But whatever the theme, two characters, peculiar in their mode of adaptation to the Malay

drama, are never wanting. One is a quaintly attired buffoon, who the whole play throughout, and in the midst of the most serious or pathetic scenes, suddenly cuts in from time to time, now addressing the actors and actresses—the latter are most often, as on the old English stage, lads in female dress—with some absurd counterfeit of their own speeches and gestures, now mimicking them in a sort of stage-aside for the benefit of the audience; and thus, in a rude fashion, supplying that side current of the comedy of human life, keeping pace with its tragedy, which the skill of Shakspeare never fails to present personified in the Stephanos and Pompeys, the nurses and clowns of his noblest dramas. I should add that the Malay buffoon is very rarely coarse, never indecent, in his licence. The other character is the prompter, not studiously unseen and unheard by the audience, as with us, but patent to all on the mid-stage, and reciting in a loud voice every sentence of the play, to be repeated after him with appropriate action by the characters themselves. The length of the performance, never under three hours, sometimes extends over as many successive nights, nor seems to tire the spectators. Meanwhile, roadside sheds, offering to Malay palates a tempting display of sweetmeats and refreshments, booths for billiard-players, and other minor amusements or attractions, abound on all sides; drunkenness and disorder are conspicuous by their absence only.

Thus pass the hours till the approach of midnight is announced by a sudden glare of light and a noise like that of a well-sustained musketry discharge, summoning all who have not already by anticipation mustered on the spot, to the field outside the village, where the "Castel" crowns in fire the rejoicings and glories of the festival.

It is, if not in general conception, yet certainly in detail, a genuine Philippine toy. A tower, of two, three, or even four stages, is constructed of bamboos close interlaced and tied together, with turrets and battlements *ad libitum*, till the whole reaches twenty-five or thirty feet in height; above, below, and to every part of the framework squibs, crackers, Catherine wheels, Roman candles, and rockets innumerable are made fast, ready for firing; and all about the "Castel" itself, but at some little distance, rise outworks, also twined of bamboo, and densely covered with fireworks of every description. For weeks beforehand preparations have been going on, and the yet unkindled edifice, festooned with white or coloured cloth, and bravely bedecked with streamer and flag, has been the favourite resort of afternoon crowds, a constant centre of joyful anticipation. Now its hour is come; midnight draws on, and the waning moon yet hangs low in the dark sky; when suddenly a preliminary up-burst of some scores of rockets, grouped clusterwise, and filling the night air as they explode with floating showers of soft-falling stars, green, red, white, purple, blue, ushers in the grand act of the "Castel." From every side, every angle of barricade and tower, the fire rushes simultaneously forth, crackling, hissing, exploding, a fairy pandemonium, lighting up the tall trees and bamboo clusters in the fields

around far and wide, and every face in the thick-gathered crowd beneath ; for not a man, woman, or child of all who have attended the "fiesta" would for any human consideration miss the spectacle, the very bourne and utmost goal of their inventive delight ; and at each fresh explosion the rapturous applause rises higher till it reaches the highest pitch of excitement consistent with the habitual impassive calm of the Malay character. Sometimes this excitement is intensified by the added sport of a fiery bull, that is, a wicker framework more or less representing the animal, and well protected by thick hides, outside of which squibs and crackers are fastened in plenty, while a couple of men concealed within the hollow, and protected from the blaze without by the hide covering, make the burning, crackling monster rush hither and thither among the spectators, who skurry away on all sides in real or simulated alarm, amid shrieks and laughter. Thus midnight passes, and the merry tumult is at its loudest and maddest, when, all too soon, the "Castel" fires wane and dwindle, the explosions cease, the last rockets shed their sinking stars, and a few minutes later all is darkness and silence over the trampled field ; noiselessly, rapidly the crowd has melted away and dispersed each to his resting-place to sleep out the brief space left till dawn, and the moon, left sole queen of the night, casts her white veil in a semblance of thin snow over grove and garden, church and home-roof, where a few expiring lamps yet twinkle amid a stillness like the stillness of the dead. We return to the room prepared for us by our host of the day before ; and the bright morning sun wakes us to find the husbandmen already gone to early mass, or out with their buffaloes in the fields, the women moving to and fro with their water jars, or washing clothes in the neighbouring stream ; streets and roads are all alive with slight-clad wayfarers and creaking carts ; and the daily current of village life is flowing calmly in its wonted channels ; as, escorted to the outer gate by the "Capitan" and his attendants, we take our leave, and fare forth on our journey by sun and shade, mountain and river, hamlet and field, back to Manila.

To Manila ? I lean over the low bulwarks of the *Leite*, as the little craft cleaves her south-western way towards the Straits of Singapore, and now see nothing around but the green heavings of the tepid China Sea ; the last dim outline of high Mindoro and wild Palawan, westernmost island of the Spain-ruled Archipelago, has faded into sky ; and the swarthy, active, boyish-seeming crew of sailors and firemen is all that remains in presence yet for five voyage-days more of the Philippines and their inhabitants. Passed Singapore ; and these too will be things of the past. But of all tropical lands, all tropical races that it has been my lot to visit, none will have left a pleasanter, a more heart-satisfying memory than the Philippine Archipelago, the home of the half-civilised Malay. Is wholly-civilised Europe, is England herself, a better home to her children ? a happier ? Compare and judge.

W. G. PALGRAVE.

The Origin of Fruits.

IN the whole museum of nature the eye of the artist can find nothing lovelier than flowers; but the second rank in beauty may be fairly claimed on behalf of fruits. Whether we look at the golden oranges, the pink-cheeked mangoes, the purple star-apples, and the scarlet capsciums of the south, or at our own crimson cherries, blushing grapes, bright holly-berries, and rosy apples, we are equally struck with the delicacy of their melting tints and the graceful curves of their rounded form. Our painters have revelled in their rich colouring; and even our sculptors, whose fastidious art compels them to reject that meretricious charm, have loved to chisel their swelling contours in snowy stone. As they hang pendent from their native boughs, clustering in brilliant masses, or scattered here and there as points of brighter light amid the dark foliage which throws up in strong relief their exquisite hues, we may recognise in their beauty the ultimate source of all that refined pleasure which mankind derives from the varied shades of earth and sea and sky, of flower and bird and butterfly, and even of the "human face divine" itself. From the contemplation of ruddy or snowy berries in primeval forests the frugivorous ancestors of our race first acquired the taste for brilliant hues, whose final outcome has produced at length our modern picture-galleries and palaces, our flower-gardens and conservatories, our household ornament and our decorative art.

In a previous paper on "The Origin of Flowers,"* we endeavoured to trace the mutual reactions of insects and blossoms upon one another's forms and hues. But we then deferred for awhile the consideration of the further question—why do human beings admire these bright whorls of coloured leaves, whose primitive function consisted in the attraction of bees and butterflies? Through what community of origin or nature does the eye of man find itself agreeably stimulated by the tints which were first developed to suit the myriad facets of primeval insects? The answer to this question we have now to attempt, by showing the various steps through which the coverings of certain seeds acquired, for the vertebrate orders—the birds and quadrupeds—exactly the same allurements of colour, scent, and taste which flowers had already acquired for the articulate orders—the bees and butterflies. To the attractive hues of fruit, I believe, we must ultimately trace back our whole artistic

* See the CORNHILL MAGAZINE for May, 1878.

pleasure in the pure physical stimulation of beautiful colours, displayed by natural objects or artificial products.

Our present inquiry, then, will yield us some account of that primitive delight in red, purple, orange, and yellow, which we usually take for granted as an innate instinct of humanity, savage or civilised. When, some few months back, we analysed the various elements of pleasure which make up our æsthetic enjoyment of a daisy, we were compelled, for the time being, to leave the original beauty of its pink and white rays wholly unexplained. We regarded the delight in colour, relatively to the subject we were then examining, as an ultimate and indecomposable factor in our developed consciousness. To-day, however, I hope we shall be able to go a little further back, and to show that this delight, like all other feelings of our nature, is no mere chance and meaningless accident, but the slow result of a long adaptation whereby man has gradually become fitted to the high and responsible station which he now occupies at the head of organic existence.

The sole object of flowering is the production of seeds, that is to say, of embryo plants, destined to replace their parents, and continue the life of their species to future generations. Flowers and seeds go together; every flower producing seed, and every seed springing from a flower. Ferns and other like plants, which have no blossoms, bring forth spores which grow into shapeless little fronds, instead of true seeds containing a young plantlet. But all flowering species produce some kind of genuine fruit, supplied with more or less of nutriment for the tender embryo in its earlier days. And this matter of nutriment is so important to a right comprehension of our subject that I venture, even at the imminent peril of appearing dull, to digress a little into the terrible mysteries of Energy, which comprise the whole difficulty of the question.

Wherever movement is taking place in any terrestrial object, the energy which moves it has been directly or indirectly supplied from the sun. In the green parts of plants, the solar rays are perpetually producing a separation of carbon and oxygen, the former element being stored up in the tissues themselves, while the latter is turned loose upon the atmosphere in a free state. Whenever they re-combine, motion and heat will result, as we see alike in our grates, our steam-engines, and our own bodies. An animal is a sort of machine—viewed from a purely physical standpoint—in which the energetic materials laid up by plants are being re-converted into the warmth which reveals itself to our touch, and the evident movement which we see in its limbs. The vegetable or animal substances which are capable of yielding these energies to our bodies we know as food or nutriment. They perform exactly the same part in the physical economy of men or beasts as that which fuel performs in the physical economy of the steam-engine. Of course, from the *mental* point of view, we have the immense difference between a self-conscious, self-guiding organism, and a dead machine requiring to be supplied and regulated by an external consciousness; yet in the fundamental physical

necessity for energetic material, either as food or as fuel, both mechanisms follow essentially the self-same mechanical laws.

But what has all this to do with the origin of fruits? Very little at first sight, indeed, yet everything when we look at the bottom of the question. In fact, what is thus true of animals and steam-engines, is equally true of plants. No motion can take place in a growing shoot without the aid of solar energy, directly supplied by the sunshine, or indirectly laid by in the older tissues. In the green parts of a plant this energy is immediately derived from the bounteous light which bathes and vivifies the leaves on every side; but in many other portions of the vegetable organism, energies previously accumulated by older organs are perpetually being utilised, for the production of movement and growth, by lazy structures which cannot work for themselves, and so feed upon the useful materials collected for them by more industrious members of the plant-commonwealth. Especially is this the case with those expensive organs which are concerned in perpetuating the species to future generations. A flower or a seed cannot directly transform waves of light into chemical separation of atoms; they depend for their growth and the due performance of their important functions upon similar separations already carried on for their behoof by the green leaves on whose bounty they rely for proper subsistence. Carbon, set free from oxygen in the leaves, has been carried to them in loose combinations by the sap; and as the bud unfolds or the seed germinates, the oxygen once more unites with this carbon (just as it unites in the furnace of the steam-engine, or the recesses of the animal body), and motion is thereby rendered possible. But without such an access of free oxygen to re-combine with the energetic materials, the blossom or the embryo could never grow at all. So we may regard these portions of a plant, incapable of self-support, and dependent for their due function upon energetic compounds laid by elsewhere, as the exact analogues of the animal or the steam-engine. They are in fact similar mechanisms, where food is being used up, and fuel is being consumed; and we find accordingly, as we might naturally expect, not only that motion results, but also that heat is evolved in quantities quite sufficient to be measured by very delicate thermometers.

Now every growing portion of a plant shares, more or less, in this animal function of feeding upon previously-fabricated nutriment. But there are two sets of organs, both intended ultimately to subserve the same purpose, in which that function becomes especially apparent. The first is in the case of the whole regular reproductive mechanism, including in that term buds, flowers, fruits, and seeds; the second is in the case of such subsidiary reproductive devices as tubers, rhizomes, corms, and all the other varieties of underground stems or roots, which botanists divide into so many puzzling technical classes, while ordinary people are content to lump them roughly together as bulbs. If we glance briefly at each of these two cases, we shall be able to comprehend more fully their connection with the doctrine of energy, and also to see more

clearly the problem before us when we endeavour to unravel the origin of fruits.

A germinating pea or a young blade of wheat is supplied by its parent with a large stock of nutriment in the shape of starch, albumen, or other common food-stuffs. If we were to burn the wheat instead of planting it, the energy contained in its substance would be given off during the act of combustion as light and heat. If, again, we were to adopt a more usual course, by grinding, baking, and eating it, then the enclosed energy would minister to the warmth of our bodies, and do its little part in enabling us to walk a mile or to lift a heavy weight. But if, in lieu of either plan, we follow the original design of nature by covering the seed with moist earth, the chemical changes which take place within it, still resulting in heat and motion, produce that special form of movement which we know as germination. New cells form themselves about the feathery head, a little sprout pushes timidly its way through the surrounding soil, and soon a pair of rounded leaves or a spike of pointed blades may be seen spreading a mass of delicate green toward the open sunlight overhead. By the time that all the stored-up nutriment contained in the seed has been thus devoured by the young plantlet, these green surfaces are in a position to assimilate fresh material for themselves, from the air which bathes them on every side, under the energetic influence of the sunbeams that fall each moment on their growing cells. But I need hardly point out the exact analogy which we thus perceive between the earliest action of the young plant and the similar actions of the frugivorous animals which subsist upon the food intended for its use.

If, however, we look at the second great case, that of bulbs and tubers, we shall see the same truth still more clearly displayed. You cannot grow a blade of wheat or a sprouting pea in the dark. The seed will germinate, it is true; but as soon as the primitive store of nutriment has been used up, it will wither away and die. Naturally enough, when all its original energy is gone, and no new energy is afforded to it from without in the form of sunshine, it cannot miraculously make growth for itself out of nothing. But if you put a hyacinth bulb in a dark cellar, and supply it with a sufficiency of water, it will grow and blossom almost as luxuriantly as in a sunny window. Now what is the difference between these two cases? Simply this: the wheat-grain or the pea has only nutriment enough supplied it by the parent plant to carry it over the first few days of its life, until it can shift for itself: while the hyacinth has energetic materials stored up in its capacious bulb to keep it in plenty during all the days of its summer existence. If we plant it in an open spot where it can bask in the bright sunshine, it will produce healthy green leaves, which help it to flower and to carry on its other physiological actions without depending entirely upon its previous accumulations: but if we place it in some dark corner, away from the sun, though its leaves will be blanched and sickly-looking, it will still

have sufficient nutriment of its own to support it through the blossoming season without the external aid of fresh sunshine.

Where did this nutriment come from, however? It was stored up, in the case of the seed, by the mother-plant; in the case of the bulb, by the hyacinth itself. The materials produced in the leaves were transferred by the sap into the flower or the stem, and were there laid by in safety till a need arose for their expenditure. All last year—perhaps for many years before—the hyacinth leaves were busily engaged in assimilating nutritive matter from the air about them, none of which the plant was then permitted to employ in the production of a blossom, but all was prudently treasured up by the gardener's care in the swelling bulb. This year, enough nourishment has been laid by to meet the cost of flowering, and so our hyacinth is enabled to produce, through its own resources, without further aid from the sun, its magnificent head of bright-coloured and heavily-scented purple bells.

Each species of plant must, of course, solve for itself the problem, during the course of its development, whether its energies will be best employed by hoarding nutriment for its own future use in bulbs and tubers, or by producing richly-endowed seeds which will give its offspring a better chance of rooting themselves comfortably, and so surviving in safety amid the ceaseless competition of rival species. The various cereals, such as wheat, barley, rye, and oats, have found it most convenient to grow afresh with each season, and to supply their embryos with an abundant store of food for their sustenance during the infant stage of plant life. Their example has been followed by peas and other pulses, by the wide class of nuts, and by the majority of garden fruits. On the other hand, the onion and the tiger-lily store nutriment for themselves in the underground stem, surrounded by a mass of overlapping or closely-wound leaves, which we call a bulb; the iris and the crocus lay by their stock of food in a woody or fleshy stalk; the potato makes a rich deposit of starch in its subterraneous branches or tubers; the turnip, carrot, radish, and beet use their root as the store-house for their hoarded food-stuffs; while the orchis produces each year a new tubercle by the side of its existing root, and this second tubercle becomes in turn the parent of its next year's flowering stem. Perhaps, however, the common colchicum or meadow-saffron affords the most instructive instance of all; for during the summer it sends up green leaves alone, which devote their entire time to the accumulation of food-stuffs in a corm at their side; and when the autumn comes round, this corm produces, not leaves, but a naked flower-stalk, which pushes its way through the moist earth, and stands solitary before the October winds, depending wholly upon the stock of nutriment laid up for it in the corm.

If we look at the parts of plants which are used as food by man or other mammals, we shall see even more clearly the community of nature between the animal functions and those of seeds, flowers, and bulbs. It is true that the graminivorous animals, like deer, sheep, cows, and

horses, live mainly off the green leaves of grasses and creeping plants. But we know how small an amount of food they manage to extract from these fibrous masses, and how constantly their whole existence is devoted to the monotonous and imperative task of grazing for very life. Those animals, however, who have learnt to live at the least cost to themselves always choose the portions of a plant which it has stored with nourishment for itself or its offspring. Men and monkeys feed naturally off fruits, seeds, and bulbs. Wheat, maize, rye, barley, oats, rice, millet, pease, vetches, and other grains or pulses form the staple sustenance of half mankind. Other fruits largely employed for food are plantains, bananas, bread-fruit, dates, cocoa-nuts, chestnuts, mangoes, mangostines, and papaws. Among roots, tubers, and bulbs, stored with edible materials, may be mentioned beet, carrot, radishes, turnips, swedes, ginger, potatoes, yam, cassava, onions, and Jerusalem artichokes. But if we look at the other vegetables used as food, we shall observe at once that they are few in number, and unimportant in economical value. In cabbage, Brussels sprouts, lettuce, succory, spinach, and water-cress, we eat the green leaves: yet nobody would ever dream of making a meal off any of these poor food-stuffs. The stalk or young sprout forms the culinary portion of asparagus, celery, sea-kale, rhubarb, and angelica, none of which vegetables are remarkable for their nutritious properties. In all the remaining food-plants, some part of the flowering apparatus supplies the table, as in true artichokes, where we eat the receptacle, richly stocked with nutriment for the opening florets; or in cauliflower, where we choose the young flower-buds themselves. In short, we find that men and the higher animals generally support themselves upon those parts of plants in which energy has been accumulated either for the future growth and unfolding of the plant itself, or for the sustenance of its tender offspring.

And now, after this long preamble, let us come back to our original question, and seek to discover what is the origin of fruits.

In botanical language, every structure which contains the seeds resulting from the fertilisation of a single blossom is known as a fruit, however hard, dry, and unattractive may be its texture or appearance. But I propose at present to restrict the term to its ordinary meaning in the mouths of every-day speakers, and to understand by it some kind of succulent seed-covering, capable of being used as food by man or other vertebrates. And our present object must be simply to discover how these particular coverings came to be developed in the slow course of organic evolution.

Doubtless the earliest seeds differed but little from the spores of ferns and other flowerless plants in the amount of nutriment with which they were provided and the mode in which they were dropped upon the nursing soil beneath. But as time went on, during the great secondary and tertiary ages of geology, throughout whose long course first the conifers and then the true flowering plants slowly superseded the gigantic horse-

tails and tree-ferns of the coal-measures, many new devices for the dispersion and nutrition of seeds were gradually developed by the pressure of natural selection.* Those plants which merely cast their naked embryos adrift upon the world to shift for themselves in the fierce struggle of stout and hardy competitors must necessarily waste their energies in the production of an immense number of seeds. In fact, calculations have been made which show that a single scarlet corn-poppy produces in one year no less than 50,000 embryos: and some other species actually exceed this enormous figure. If, then, any plant happens by a favourable combination of circumstances to modify the shape of its seed in such a manner that it can be more readily conveyed to open or unoccupied spots, it will be able in future to economise its strength, and thus to give both itself and its offspring a better chance in the struggle for life. There are many ways in which natural selection has effected this desirable consummation.

The thistle, the dandelion, and the cotton-bush provide their seeds with long tufts of light hair, thin and airy as gossamer, by which they are carried on the wings of the wind to bare spaces, away from the shadow of their mother-plant, where they may root themselves successfully in the vacant soil. The maple, the ash, and the pine supply their embryos with flattened wings, which serve them in like manner not less effectually. Both these we may classify as *wind-dispersed* seeds. A second set of plants have seed-vessels which burst open explosively when ripe, and scatter their contents to a considerable distance. The balsam forms the commonest example in our European gardens; but a well-known tropical tree, the sand-box, displays the same peculiarity in a form which is almost alarming, as its large, hard, dry capsules fly apart with the report of a small pistol, and drive out the disk-shaped nuts within so forcibly as to make a blow on the cheek decidedly unpleasant. These we may designate as *self-dispersed* seeds. Yet a third class may be conveniently described as *animal-dispersed*, divisible once more into two sub-classes, the involuntarily and the voluntarily aided. Of the former kind we have examples in those seeds which, like burrs and cleavers, are covered with little hooks, by whose assistance they attach themselves to the fur or wool of passers-by. The latter or voluntarily aided sort are exemplified in fruits proper, the subject of our present investigation, such as apples, plums, peaches, cherries, haws, and brambleberries. Every one of these plants is provided with hard and indigestible seeds, coated or surrounded by a soft, sweet, pulpy, perfumed, bright-coloured, and nutritious covering known as fruit. By all these means the plant allures birds or mammals to swallow and disperse its

* I trust that in the sequel, the critical botanist will excuse me for having neglected the strict terminology of carpological science, and made no distinction between seeds and fruits. Some little simplification is absolutely necessary for general readers in this the most involved department of structural botany.

undigested seed, giving in, as it were, the pulpy covering as a reward to the animal for the service thus conferred. But before we go on to inquire into the mode of their development we must glance aside briefly at a second important difference in the constitution of seeds.

If we plant a grain of mustard-seed in moist earth and allow it to germinate, we shall see that its young leaves begin from the very first to grow green and assimilate energetic matter from the air around them. They are, indeed, compelled to do so, because they have no large store of nutriment laid up in the seed-leaves for their future use by the mother-plant. But if we treat a pea in the same manner, we shall find that it long continues to derive nourishment from the abundant stock of food treasured up in its big round seed-leaves. Now of course any plant which thus learns to lay by in time for the wants of its offspring gives its embryo a far better chance of surviving and leaving descendants in its turn, than one which abandons its infant plants to their own unaided resources in a stern battle with the unkindly world. Exactly the same difference exists between the two cases as that which exists between the wealthy merchant's son, launched on life with abundant capital accumulated by his father, and the street Arab, turned adrift, as soon as he can walk alone, to shift or starve for himself in the lanes and alleys of a great city.

So then, as plants went on varying and improving under the stress of over-population, it would naturally result that many species must hit independently upon this device of laying by granaries of nutriment for the use of their descendants. But side by side with the advancing development of vegetable life, animal life was also developing in complexity and perfect adaptation to its circumstances. And herein lay a difficult dilemma for the unhappy plant. On the one hand, in order to compete with its neighbours, it must lay up stores of starch and oil and albumen for the good of its embryos; while, on the other hand, the more industriously it accumulated these expensive substances, the more temptingly did it lay itself open to the depredations of the squirrels, mice, bats, monkeys, and other clever thieves, whose number was daily increasing in the forests round about. The plant becomes, in short, like a merchant in a land exposed to the inroads of powerful robbers. If he does not keep up his shop with its tempting display of wares, he must die for want of custom; if he shows them too readily and unguardedly, he will lay himself open to be plundered of his whole stock-in-trade. In such a case, the plant and the merchant have recourse to the self-same devices. Sometimes they surround themselves with means of defence against the depredators; sometimes they buy themselves off by sacrificing a portion of their wealth to secure the safety of the remainder. Those seeds which adopt the former plan we call *nuts*, while to those which depend upon the latter means of security we give the name of *fruits*.

A nut is a hard-coated seed, which deliberately lays itself out to

escape the notice and baffle the efforts of monkeys and other frugivorous animals. Instead of bidding for attention by its bright hues, like the flower and fruit, the nut is purposely clad in a quiet coat of uniform green, indistinguishable from the surrounding leaves, during its earlier existence; while afterwards it assumes a dull brown colour as it lies upon the dusky soil beneath. Nuts are rich in oils and other useful food-stuffs: but to eat these is destructive to the life of the embryo: and therefore the nut commonly surrounds itself with a hard and stony shell, which defies the stoutest teeth to pierce its thickened walls. Outside this solid coating, it often spreads a softer covering with a nauseous, bitter taste, so familiar to us all in the walnut, which at once warns off the enemy from attacking the unsavoury morsel. Not content with all these protective devices, of colour, taste, and hardness, the nut in many cases contains poisonous juices, and is thickly clad in hooked and pointed mail, which wounds the hands or lips of the would-be robber. In brief, a nut is a seed which has survived in the struggle for life by means of multiplied protections against the attacks of enemies. We cannot have a better instance of these precautions than the common cocoa-nut palm. Its seed hangs at a great height from the ground, on a tall and slender stem, unprovided with branches which might aid the climber, and almost inaccessible to any animal except the persevering monkey. Its shell is very thick and hard, so extremely impermeable that a small passage has to be left by which the germinating shoot may push its way out of the stronghold where it is born. Outside this shell, again, lies a thick matting of hairy fibres, whose elasticity breaks its fall from the giddy height at which it hangs. Yet, in spite of all these cunning precautions, even the cocoa-nut is not quite safe from the depredations of monkeys, or, stranger still, of tree-climbing crabs. The common Brazil-nuts of our fruiterers' shops are almost equally interesting, their queer, shapeless forms being closely packed together, as they hang from their native boughs, in a hard outer shell, not unlike that of the cocoa-nut. It must be very annoying to the unsuspecting monkey, who has succeeded after violent efforts in breaking the external coat, to find that he must still deal with a mass of hard, angular, and uncanny nuts, which sadly cut his tender gums and threaten the stability of his precious teeth—those invaluable tools which serve him well in the place of knives, hammers, scissors, and all other human implements.

A fruit, on the other hand, lays itself open in every way to attract the attention of animals, and so to be dispersed by their aid, often amid the nourishing refuse of their meals. It is true that, with the fruit as with the nut, to digest the actual seed itself would be fatal to the life of the young plant. But fruits get over this difficulty by coating their seeds first with a hard, indigestible shell, and then with a soft, sweet, pulpy, and nutritious outer layer. The purely accidental or functional origin of this covering is testified by the immense variety of ways in which it has been developed. Sometimes a single seed has shown a

slight tendency to succulence in its outer coat, and forthwith it has gone on laying up juices from generation to generation, until it has developed into a one-seeded berry. Sometimes a whole head of seeds has been surrounded by a fleshy stem, and the attention of animals has thenceforward encouraged its new habit by ensuring the dispersion of its embryos. A few of the various methods by which fruits attain their object we shall examine in detail further on : it will suffice for the present to point out that any property which secured for the seed dispersion by animal agency would at once give it an advantage over its fellows, and thus tend to be increased in all future generations.

So, then, as birds, squirrels, bats, monkeys, and the higher animals generally increased on the face of the earth, every seed which showed a tendency to surround itself with succulent pulp would obviously gain a point thereby in its rivalry with other species. Accordingly, as we might naturally expect, fruits, which have been developed to suit the taste of birds and mammals, are of much more recent geological origin than flowers, which have been developed to suit the taste of insects. For example, there is no family of plants which contains a greater number of fruity seeds than the rose tribe, in which are comprised the apple, pear, plum, cherry, blackberry, raspberry, strawberry, quince, medlar, loquat, peach, apricot, and nectarine, besides the humbler hips, haws, sloes, and common hedge-fruits, which, though despised by lordly man, form the chief winter sustenance of such among our British birds as do not migrate to warmer climates during our chilly December days. Now, no trace of the rose tribe can be discovered until late in tertiary times ; in other words, no fruit-bearers appear before the evolution of the fruit-eaters who called them into existence : while, on the other hand, the rapid development and variation of the tribe in the succeeding epoch shows how great an advantage it derived from its tendency to produce edible seed-coverings.

But not only must these coverings be succulent and nutritious : they must also be conspicuous and alluring. For the attainment of these objects the fruit has recourse to just the same devices which had already been so successfully initiated by the insect-fertilised flowers. It collects into its pulpy substance a quantity of that commonly-diffused vegetable principle which we call sugar. Now sugar, from its crystalline composition, is peculiarly adapted for acting upon the exposed nerves of taste in the tongue of vertebrates ; and the stimulation which it affords, like all healthy and normal ones, when not excessive in amount, is naturally pleasurable to the excited sense. Of course, in our own case, the long habituation of our frugivorous ancestors to this particular stimulant has rendered us peculiarly sensitive to its effects. But even from the first, there can be little doubt that a body so specially fitted to arouse sensation in the gustatory nerve must have afforded pleasure to the unspecialised palates of birds and rodents : for we know that even in the case of naturally carnivorous animals, like dogs, a taste for sugar is

extremely noticeable. So then, the sweet juices of the fruit were early added to its soft and nutritive pulp as an extra attraction for the animal senses.

Perfume of course follows in the wake of sweetness. Indeed, the difference between taste and smell is much smaller than most people imagine. When tiny floating particles of a body, in the gaseous state, affect certain exposed nerves in the cavity of the nose, we call the resulting sensation an odour; when larger particles of the same body, in the liquid or dissolved state, affect similar exposed nerves in the tongue, we call the resulting sensation a taste. But the mechanism of the two senses is probably quite similar, while their exciting causes and their likes or dislikes are almost identical. As our great psychological teacher, Mr. Herbert Spencer, well puts it, "smell is anticipatory taste." So we need not be surprised to find that the delicate fragrance of peaches, strawberries, oranges, and pineapples, is a guide to their edibility, and a foreshadowing of their delicious flavour, leading us on by an instinctive action to place the savoury morsels between our lips.

But the greatest need of all, if the plant would succeed in enticing the friendly parrot or the obsequious lemur to disperse its seed, is that of conspicuousness. Let the fruit be ever so luscious and ever so laden with sweep syrups, it can never secure the suffrages of the higher animals if it lies hidden beneath a mass of green foliage, or clothes itself in the quiet garb of the retiring nut. To attract from a distance the eyes of wandering birds or mammals, it must dress itself up in a gorgeous livery of crimson, scarlet, and orange. The contrast between nuts and fruits is exactly parallel to the contrast between the wind-fertilised and the insect-fertilised flowers. An apple-tree laden with its red-cheeked burden, an orange bough weighed down with its golden spheres, a rowan or a holly bush displaying ostentatiously its brilliant berries to the birds of the air, is a second edition of the roses, the rhododendrons, and the May-thorns, which spread their bright petals in the spring before the fascinated eyes of bees and butterflies. Some gay and striking tint, which may contrast strongly with the green foliage around, is needed by the developing fruit, or else its pulpiness, its sweetness, and its fragrance will stand it in poor stead beside its bright-hued compeers.

How fruits began to acquire these brilliant tints is not difficult to see. We found already in the case of flowers that all external portions of a plant, except such green parts as are actually engaged in assimilating carbon, under the influence of solar energies, show a tendency to assume tints other than green. This tendency would, of course, be checked by natural selection in those seeds which, like nuts, are destroyed by animals, and so endeavour to escape their notice; while it would be increased by natural selection in those seeds which, like fruits proper, derive benefit from the observation of animals, and so endeavour to attract their attention. But it is noticeable that fruits themselves are sour, green, and hard during their unripe stage,—that is to say, before the seeds are ready

to be severed from the mother-plant; and that they only acquire their sweet taste, brilliant colour, and soft pulp just at the time when their mature seeds become capable of a separate existence.

Perhaps, however, the point which most clearly proves the purely functional origin of fruits is found in the immense variety of their structure, a variety far surpassing that of any other vegetable organ. It does not matter at all what portion of the seed-covering or its adjacent parts happens first to show the tendency towards succulence, sweetness, fragrance, and brilliancy. It serves the attractive purpose equally well whether it be calyx, or stalk, or skin, or receptacle. Just as in the case of flowers, we found that the coloured portion might equally well consist of stamens, petals, sepals, bracts, or spathe,—so, but even more conspicuously in the case of fruits, the attractive pulp may be formed of any organ whatsoever which exhibits the least tendency towards a pulpy habit, and an accumulation of saccharine deposits.

Thus, in the pomegranate, each separate seed is enclosed in a juicy testa or altered shell; in the nutmeg and the spindle-tree, an aril or purely gratuitous coloured mass spreads gradually over the whole inner nut; in the plum and cherry, a single part, the pericarp, divides itself into two membranes, whereof the inner or protective coat is hard and stony, while the outer or attractive coat is soft, sweet, and bright-coloured; in the strawberry, the receptacle, which should naturally be a mere green bed for the various seed-vessels, grows high, round, pulpy, sweet, and ruddy; in the rose, the fruit-stem expands into a scarlet berry, containing the seed-vessels within, which also happens in a slightly different manner with the apple, pear, and quince; while in the fig, a similar stem encloses the innumerable seeds belonging to a whole colony of tiny blossoms, which thus form a compound fruit, just as the daisy head, with its mass of clustered florets, forms a composite flower. Strangest of all, the common South American cashew tree produces its nut (which is the true fruit) at the end of a swollen, pulpy, coloured stalk, and so preserves its embryo by the vicarious sacrifice of a fallacious substitute. These are only a few out of the many ways in which the selective power of animals has varied the surroundings of different seeds to serve a single ultimate purpose.

Nor is any plan too extravagant for adoption by some aberrant species. What seed-organ could seem less adapted for the attraction of animals than a cone like that of pines and fir trees? Yet even this hard, scaly covering has been modified, in the course of ages, so as to form a fruit. In the cypress, with its soft young cones, we can see dimly the first step in the process; in the juniper, the cone has become quite succulent and berry-like; and finally, in the red fruit of the yew, all resemblance to the original type is entirely overlaid by its acquired traits.

Equally significant is the fact that closely-allied species often choose totally different means for attracting or escaping observation. Thus,

within the limits of the rose tribe itself we get such remarkable variations as the strawberry, where the receptacle forms the fruit; the apple, which depends on the peduncle, or swollen stalk, for its allurements; the raspberry, where each seed-vessel of the compound group has a juicy coating of its own, and so forth; while, on the other hand, the potentilla has no fruit at all, in the popular sense of the word; and the almond actually diverges so far from the ordinary habits of the tribe as to adopt the protective tactics of a nut. Similarly, in the palm tribe, while most species fortify themselves against monkeys by shells of extravagant hardness, as we see in the vegetable ivory, and the solid coquilla nuts from which door-handles are manufactured, a few kinds, like the date and the doom-palm, trust rather to the softness and sweetness of their pulp, as aids to dispersion. The truth which we learn from these diverse cases may be shortly summed up thus: Whatever peculiarities tend to preserve the life of a species, in whatever opposite ways, equally aid it in the struggle for life, and may be indifferently produced in the most closely related types.

And now let us glance for a moment—less fully than the subject demands, for this long exposition has run away with our space—at the reactive effects of fruit upon the animal eye. We took it for granted above that birds and mammals could discriminate between the red or yellow berry and the green foliage in whose midst it grows. Indeed, were other proof wanting, we should be justified in concluding that animals generally are possessed of a sense for the discrimination of colour, from the mere fact that all those fruits and flowers which depend for their dispersion or fertilisation upon animal agency, are brightly tinted, while all those which depend upon the wind, or other insentient energies, are green or dull brown in hue. But many actual observations, too numerous to be detailed here, also show us beyond the possibility of error, that the higher animals do, as a matter of fact, possess a sense of colour, differing in no important particular from that of civilised man.

Whether this sense was developed, however, by the constant search for berries and insects, or whether it was derived from a still earlier ancestry, it would be very difficult to decide. It is possible that, as we saw reason to believe in the case of the flowers and the insect vision, the colours of fruits and the colour-sense of birds and mammals may have gone on developing side by side; each plant surviving in proportion as its seeds grew more and more distinctive, and each animal, in turn, standing a better chance of food in proportion as its discrimination of such seeds grew more and more acute. But as there are excellent reasons for crediting fishes and reptiles also with a high faculty for the perception of colour, it may be safer to conclude that the sense was inherited by birds and mammals from our common vertebrate progenitors, being only quickened and intensified by the reactive influence of fruits.

Yet it must be remembered that the earliest fruit-eaters, though they might find the scarlet, crimson, or purple coats of their food an aid to

discrimination in the primæval forests, would not necessarily derive any pleasure from the stimulation thus afforded. That pleasure has been slowly begotten in all frugivorous races by the constant use of these particular nerves in the search for food, which has at last produced in them a calibre and a sensitiveness answering pleasurable to the appropriate stimulation. Just as the peach, which a dog would reject, has become delicious to our sense of taste; just as the pineapple, at which he would sniff unconcernedly, has become exquisite to our sense of smell; so the pure tints of the plum, the orange, the mango, and the pomegranate, which he would disregard, have become lovely to our sense of colour. And, further still, just as we transfer the tastes formed in the first two cases to the sweetmeats of the East, or to the violets, hyacinths, and heliotropes of our gardens; so do we transfer the taste formed in the third case to our gorgeous peonies, roses, dahlias, crocuses, tiger-lilies, and chrysanthemums; to our silks, satins, damasks, and textile fabrics generally; to our vases, our mosaics, our painted windows, our frescoed walls, our Academies, our Louvres, and our Vaticans. Even as we put sugar and spices into insipid dishes to gratify the gustatory nerves, whose sensibility was originally developed by the savour of tropical fruits, so do we put red, blue, and purple into our pottery, our decoration, and our painting to gratify the visual nerves, whose sensibility was originally developed by the rich tint of grapes and strawberries, star-apples and oranges.

And here again, as in the case of flowers, the feeling once aroused has found for itself new objects in the voluntary selection of beautiful mates—that is to say, of mates whose colouring gratified the rising delight in pure tints. The taste formed upon blossoms produced, by its reaction, crimson butterflies and burnished beetles, the sun-birds of the East and the humming-birds of the West. So, too, the taste formed upon fruits produced, by a like reaction, parrots, cockatoos, toucans, birds of paradise, nutmeg pigeons, and a thousand other tropical creatures of exquisite plumage and delicate form. As we mount up through the mammalian series, we scarcely come upon any hues brighter than dull brown or tawny yellow among the marsupials, the carnivores, the ruminants, or the thick-skinned beasts; but when we arrive at the seed-eating classes, such as the rodents, the bats, and the quadrumana, we find a profusion of colour in many squirrels, flying-foxes, and monkeys; while Mr. Darwin does not hesitate in attributing to the same selective action the rosy cheeks, pearly teeth, blue eyes, and golden hair of the human species.

Nor is it only in the choice of mates that the nascent taste for colour displays itself. Even below the limits of humanity bright-hued objects afford a passing pleasure to more than one æsthetically-endowed species. Monkeys love to pull crimson flowers in pieces, dart in pursuit of brilliant tropical birds, and are attracted by the sight of red or yellow rags. Those queer little creatures, the bower birds, carry the same feel-

ing a step further by collecting fragments of brilliantly-coloured objects to decorate their gaudy meeting-places. But when we reach the race of man, we find the love of colour producing far more conspicuous secondary results. The savage daubs his body with red or blue paint, and plants his garden plot with the scarlet hibiscus or the purple bougain-villia. Soon, with the rise of pottery and cloth-making, he learns the use of pigments and the art of dyeing. Next, painting proper follows, with all the decorative appliances of Egypt, India, China, and Japan, until at last our whole life comes to be passed in the midst of clothing and furniture, wall-papers and carpets, books and ornaments, vases and tiles, statuettes and pictures, every one of which has been specially prepared with dyes or pigments, to gratify the feeling originally derived from the contemplation of woodland berries by prehistoric man, or his frugivorous ancestors. And all these varied objects of civilised life may be traced back directly to the reaction of coloured fruits upon the structure of the mammalian eye.

What a splendid and a noble prospect for humanity in its future evolutions may we not find in this thought, that from the coarse animal pleasure of beholding food mankind has already developed, through delicate gradations, our modern disinterested love for the glories of sunset and the melting shades of ocean, for the gorgeous pageantry of summer flowers, and the dying beauty of autumn leaves, for the exquisite harmony which reposes on the canvas of Titian, and the golden haze which glimmers over the dreamy visions of Turner! If man, base as he yet is, can nevertheless rise to-day in his highest moments so far above his sensuous self, what may he not hope to achieve hereafter, under the hal-lowing influence of those chaster and purer aspirations which are welling up within him even now toward the perfect day!

G. A.

Lessing.

THERE seems to be a good deal of whimsicality in the decrees of those powers, whoever they may be, that preside over the destinies of writers. For nearly one hundred years English readers have been content to know little or nothing of Lessing. Some of his theological writings have no doubt been read by a few, while his *Laokoon* has long been a favourite with a still smaller number of thoughtful artists. Yet of the man himself, and of his rich and varied work, we have been content to remain utterly ignorant. Oddly enough, after this long period of neglect, we begin to be very curious; and almost simultaneously our curiosity is gratified by the appearance of two biographies, the full and scholarly work of Mr. Sime and the highly interesting volume of Miss Zimmern.

It is more easy to account for the present awakening of interest than for the past neglect. Lessing has long been one of the most revered of names to Germans. As Hettner says, "dem Deutschen geht das Herz auf, wenn er von Lessing redet." The Lessing literature in Germany is in itself a considerable study. This being so, one might be sure that, with our present growing interest in German writers, an adequate account of Lessing would soon be provided.

But how comes it that we have so long neglected Lessing? One would have said that of all Germans Lessing has most to recommend him to English sympathies. He is least German in those qualities which we are wont to think characteristic of that nation, namely, sentimentality and misty profundity. The strong, healthy nature of his intellect, and the fine qualities of his style, would, one supposes, be admirably adapted to attract and impress English readers.

One or two conjectural reasons may be given for this curious indifference. First of all, Lessing was a pioneer, and as such has had to pay the penalty of being overlooked in favour of those who carried his work to a brilliant completion. So large a part of his writings was negative and destructive, a mere clearing of the ground for the unimpeded play of constructive genius. A second reason may be found in the width and variety of his work. Lessing was always striking out new paths for his restless intellectual activity, and there are few who have the qualifications requisite for an adequate appreciation of his many-sided mind. Again, the biographical interest of the subject is not conspicuous and obvious. Lessing's life was from first to last a severe struggle, not only with ignorance and prejudice, but with obstructive material circumstance. Now to the common mind

the strenuous and manly struggle of a Lessing, at every stage of his course impeded and cramped, though never thwarted, has less charm than the serene life of a Goethe, smiled on by fortune from the first, breathing of ample content, and reflecting the lustre of aristocratic surroundings. With most persons the capability of admiring a manly and invincible spirit, opposing itself to hostile circumstances, is exceedingly limited; an harmonious existence pleases more than a discordant. To this it must be added that Lessing's temperament and character offer no exceptional and striking features of the quaint and picturesque order. Lessing's was essentially a well-balanced nature answering to the Greek ideal of moderation and harmony; and such characters, however valuable, do not exactly serve as tempting material for popular biography.

Lessing's life was comparatively uneventful. He was born at Camenz, in Saxony, in 1729. His father was a Lutheran clergyman, and one of a line of pastors who appear to have combined a moderate orthodoxy with an unusual measure of culture. Lessing's mother, too, came from a clerical family, so that he was born into the very atmosphere of theology. His home was, as might be expected, a strict one, very much resembling, in its rigorous discipline, those Scotch Calvinistic houses which Mr. G. MacDonald has described for us. Yet the restraints imposed were not unendurable, and they proved, as in many other instances, an excellent preparatory discipline. Lessing's mother was not a striking figure, only a worthy but somewhat commonplace example of the proper clergyman's daughter. The father, on the other hand, was a man of ripe scholarship and of exceptional breadth, who, if we are to believe Adolf Stahr, served Lessing to some extent as the model of his finest dramatic creation, *Nathan the Wise*.

Young Gotthold was of course destined to prolong the race of learned divines. He was sent to a half-monastic school, the Institution of St. Afra, in Meissen, which laid itself out to prepare youths for the clerical career. But his thoughts went astray after more profane objects. He did indeed satisfy his father's sentiment for accurate scholarship, only his classical studies did not, as they should have done, breed in him a holy contempt of pagan morality, and so prepare the way for Christian dogmatic instruction. Lessing forgot all about theology in the new and stirring world opened up by Plautus and Terence. He was fortunate enough to find in this somewhat dreary retreat a teacher who guided his awakening instinct for literature. Lessing showed the usual precocity of great men, and while at Meissen, between the age of twelve and of seventeen, attempted a number of odes, plays, and essays. Of these, the most remarkable, perhaps, as illustrating the early development of his leading ideas, is the essay in which he sought to refute the old woman's notion that times tend to get worse. He showed at this early period both a healthy impulse of self-criticism and a decided leaning to dramatic production by writing a comedy, "*The Young Scholar*," in which he

unsparingly ridiculed the pedantry of the mere student, who knows nothing of real life.

At seventeen Lessing was sent to the University of Leipzig, to study theology. He was now, however, far too independent to allow his studies to be chosen for him. The teaching of the University did not inspire him with much reverence, and he appears to have been a very irregular frequenter of the lecture-rooms. One almost fancies he must have been set down by his fellow-students as decidedly too priggish. What he most enjoyed in the way of University advantages was the debates or disputations which were originated by one of his professors, and which at once answered to and quickened his deep-seated love of a dialectic collision of ideas. For the rest, Lessing discovered that books do not provide a complete culture, and, much to his pious parents' alarm, began to learn the accomplishments of dancing and fencing, and to see something of the variegated life of a large town. In Leipzig he could actually behold what he had dreamt of when reading Latin comedies at St. Afra, a stage spectacle; and the theatre now became his most engrossing interest. A talented actress made a *protégé* of him, and under her inspiring influence he betook himself to play-writing.

Stahr draws an interesting parallel between the university life of Lessing and of Goethe. Both went to Leipzig at the age of seventeen, both had the determination to secure a wide culture in opposition to their parents' wishes, and both made university lectures a secondary thing in comparison with social culture. Here, however, the resemblance ceases. While Lessing's thorough intellectual discipline at St. Afra enabled him when at Leipzig to carry on his reading independently, Goethe's years spent at the university were so much lost time, as far as study was concerned. A more striking difference marks their introduction to social life. The young Frankfort patrician, who brought with him letters of introduction to the best houses in Leipzig, had a widely-different view of life from that which was vouchsafed to the poor parson's lad, "to whom, after his five years' monastic solitude, the world and life were almost more unfamiliar than the inside of the moon."

Lessing's way of looking at the proper end of university life could not but shock his somewhat puritanic parents. It must be added that his new tastes were a little out of proportion to the capacity of his purse. Only one thing could result from this state of things—perfect independence of his father; and this Lessing secured by leaving the university and beginning life, at the age of nineteen, as a journalist in Berlin.

Berlin was just then not without its attractions for an aspiring literary genius. Frederick the Great was doing his best to make his capital a centre of culture, though he supposed that this was only possible by introducing French ideas and manners. As Mr. Sime observes, Berlin was at this time "a sort of satellite to Paris, feebly reflecting its splendour." Still there was a certain fashion of culture involving some degree of interest in ideas, and Lessing threw himself

heart and soul into the new current of literary activity. He found little encouragement to continue his dramatic compositions, and he turned instead to dramatic and literary criticism, a field which just then sadly wanted tilling. A noteworthy incident of this first visit to Berlin was his quarrel with Voltaire, which throws a curious light on the personal characters of the two men.

Although his writings at once made a mark, Lessing had self-restraint enough to suspend literary work for a while, in order to deepen and widen his studies. This he sought to accomplish in the quiet university town of Wittenberg. Here, in the High School of Luther, he was naturally drawn to the study of theology, and from this period date his first essays in theological discussions—namely, those "Vindications" in which he undertook to defend certain writers of the time of the Reformation against the misrepresentations of later critics.

On his return to Berlin, at the age of twenty-three, Lessing displayed a much riper literary faculty. Of the writings of this period mention must be made of the crushing bit of criticism, *A Vade Mecum for Herr Sam. Gotth. Lange*, in which the accurate student of classic literature finely expresses his contempt for a dull and unintelligent reading of his favourite Horace. Lessing now felt strong enough to renew his dramatic attempts, and in *Miss Sara Sampson* he broke with the reigning French traditions, and produced a drama of middle-class life, after the model of Lillo's *George Barnwell*.

This period of rapidly-developing productivity seems to have been a happy one in other respects. The tedious objections of too solicitous parents gradually ceased, while in a new group of friends Lessing found ample sympathy and refreshment. In men like Moses Mendelssohn and Frederick Nicolai, Lessing was happy enough to meet with congenial and appreciative natures, though it must be confessed that they were hardly of an intellectual stature to survey all Lessing's comprehensive aims. Yet while Lessing's work was thus recognized by the competent few, it did not pay, and he made another venture in dramatic production in Leipzig, his old university town. His sojourn happened to synchronise with the outbreak of the Seven Years' War, an event which might, one supposes, easily have tried the amicable relations between the Saxon Lessing and his Prussian acquaintance. Lessing, however, proved himself superior to all narrow political partisanship, and even incurred the anger of his fellow-citizens by associating with the Prussian officers whom the war brought into the town. From Leipzig he once more returned to Berlin, at the age of twenty-nine. The first fruit of his maturer studies and fuller experience was the celebrated *Literary Letters*. These letters, as Mr. Sime points out, exactly hit the prevailing temper of the hour. Frederick's sturdy and spirited policy had awakened a new sense of national life in Prussia, and Lessing's *Letters*, by setting the key of a higher style of poetic composition, well harmonised with the tendencies of the time.

With all his success, Lessing found literature something of a drudgery, and he longed for the freedom and repose which come of a material sufficiency. An opportunity of securing this soon occurred in the shape of a proposal to accompany, as secretary, a certain General von Tauentzien to Breslau, where he was appointed to direct the Silesian mint. By accepting this post, Lessing secured the means of carrying out his literary plans with a certain degree of comfort; he also obtained an excellent opportunity of widening his knowledge of men and manners. At Breslau Lessing mixed freely in the jovial society of actors of the rougher sort and of officers. He also acquired a curious passion for gambling. Two very natural results followed: his literary friends gave him up for lost; and his family looked on him as a prosperous young man whose growing wealth was providentially destined to supply all their pecuniary deficiencies. Lessing had to dispel each of these illusions. Though he generously responded to the demands of his family, he gave them to understand that he intended to employ his earnings in the main upon himself, more especially by collecting a copious library. It must be added that Lessing's high feeling of integrity deterred him from making all the profit which his connection with minting operations would have rendered possible to less scrupulous men. To his Berlin friends he was soon able to give a substantial proof that his dissipations had not interfered with his productivity. Both *Minna von Barnhelm*, Lessing's cleverest drama, and the *Laokoon*, his finest prose work, were mostly written during this time. As Stahr observes, both of these works express the cheerful and careless mood in which Lessing found himself at Breslau.

After this five years' sojourn in Breslau, Lessing once more repaired to Berlin with the hope of securing the vacant post of royal librarian. The patron of Voltaire and French literature, who had the meanest idea of German writers, looked on Lessing as but one more of the unpolished pedants, and persistently refused to give him the post. Little wonder that Lessing once more turned his back on Berlin as soon as a new field of labour presented itself to view. Some cultivated Hamburg merchants at this time entertained the estimable idea of founding a national theatre in their well-to-do city. Lessing was invited to take part in the scheme by writing a series of plays. This offer he declined, but he consented to take part in the undertaking as general adviser and as critic. The theatre was actually started, and Lessing began his work, but the enterprise soon broke down. The comfortable and contented Hamburgers did not appreciate these praiseworthy efforts to instruct them in the mysteries of the higher art, while the opposition of the clergy presented a direct obstacle to the success of the undertaking. The ambitious theatre only succeeded in preserving its existence for nine months. Yet short as was the period of Lessing's official activity, it bore no less valuable fruit than the two volumes known as the *Hamburg Dramaturgy*.

For Lessing himself this visit to Hamburg was of consequence, since

it introduced him to the woman in whom he was to find the deepest sympathy that ever gladdened his life. It looks indeed, at first, as though Lessing was singularly happy in his social surroundings at Hamburg, for after the National Theatre project had collapsed, he stayed on three years in this bright and lively commercial town. Yet Lessing was far from being as gay and contented as in the Breslau days. The failure of the National Theatre vexed and irritated him. He felt himself once more thrown on the uncertainties of a purely literary life. His chief production during this period was the *Antiquarian Letters*, in which he met and demolished certain criticisms on the *Laokoon* by one Klotz. These letters, which are the bitterest of all Lessing's bitter writings, indicate plainly enough the exasperated temper of those Hamburg days.

At last the long-sought official recognition came, in no very magnificent shape truly, and not from the quarter whence he had expected it. At the court of Brunswick, in Lessing's time, there was something of that Mæcenas-like spirit of patronage for literature and art which afterwards gave to Weimar a European celebrity. Lessing's claims found recognition here, and he was invited by the Hereditary Prince to accept the post of librarian at the Wolfenbüttel Library—the Bibliotheca Augusta, of which Leibnitz had once been the director—with a salary of 600 thalers (90%), free lodging and firing. The appointment was created specially for Lessing. He was not required to do the ordinary duties of a librarian, but simply to investigate the collection and to bring to light some of its hidden treasures.

The post, one would suppose, had much to recommend it to a man of Lessing's tastes, and it provided at least a maintenance; yet it brought him little satisfaction. He felt the dreariness of the sleepy old town and superseded capital. Accustomed to ample social intercourse of the brightest sort, and to a stimulating contact with the stir of life, Lessing chafed and fretted in his Wolfenbüttel cage. Not only so, having but little business capacity in the ordering of his affairs, Lessing was quite unable, even in these quiet surroundings, to keep out of debt. All this, together with the hard work of overhauling the contents of the library, wearied him. He once excused his omission to take leave of a friend when returning to Wolfenbüttel, by saying, "It is not worth while to bid farewell when one dies, or travels from Brunswick to Wolfenbüttel!" Later on, he complained that the dust of books was settling on his nerves.

New sources of anxiety opened up in connection with his growing affection for Eva König, the widow of a Hamburg friend, to whom he betrothed himself at the age of forty-two. His engagement made him the more concerned to better his position; and his patron appears to have added to his troubles by holding out expectations which he failed to satisfy. Lessing was evidently of too independent a spirit to make a good *protégé* to a somewhat exacting prince, and the narrative of his

tedious disputes with his patron reminds one of the contentions between the high-spirited young Mozart and the Archbishop of Salzburg. Lessing's new friend proved to be eminently fitted to soothe and to guide his proud and sensitive nature, and the correspondence of these unromantic lovers illustrates in a striking manner the kind of help which a wise, skilful, and sympathetic woman is able to give to a man who is intellectually far above her.

Lessing's official duties seem to have taken a good deal of his time, for he produced but little during these first years of his residence in Wolfenbüttel. Of these writings, the most important is the tragedy, *Emilia Galotti*, which had been begun some years before. His researches in the library led to his continuing his series of *Vindications*.

At length, after many delays, trials, and doubts, the warm-hearted friends were united, and, for awhile, the broken and fretted current of Lessing's life flowed smoothly in deep and silent channels. The picture of his domestic life, as left by relatives and friends, is very charming, and forms a delightful contrast to the rest of the narrative. Here are one or two extracts from Miss Zimmern's pleasant description of Lessing's home :—

His house was appointed with the same unostentatious elegance that appeared in his dress. . . . It was his habit to rise about six, and work in his study for some hours, and only when writing did he allow himself to sit crookedly or to wear a loose coat. In due time he would go and wake the children. If he had no duties at the library, he would write till dinner; if he had, he would dress carefully after breakfast, and repair to his post. The dinner-hour was half-past twelve, and it rarely happened but Lessing brought in some unexpected guests who had been visiting the library or the librarian, for he had become a celebrity, and people travelled far and wide to speak to him or see him. "Never mind if there is not enough to eat," he would say to his wife, when such invasions exceeded bounds, "make up with bacon, and eggs." And his wife, who was as hospitable as he, invariably gave the visitors a hearty welcome. . . . Cheerful talk he held the best condiment to a meal, and his jokes and heartiest laughter were reserved for home. His afternoons he commonly devoted to recreation and a short walk. At nine a frugal supper was served, at which, again, visitors were often present. These were usually more intimate friends, with whom Lessing would afterwards play a game of his favourite chess, sucking an empty pipe if smokers were present, to appear sociable. . . . Between ten and eleven he went to bed, enjoying a deep sleep that never forsook him, and which, according to his account, was always dreamless.

This forcibly reminds one of the receptions given by two other German celebrities to their casual visitors. The simple yet graceful bearing of the Wolfenbüttel host seems to come midway between the quaint austerity of the Königsberg philosopher and the kingly ease and elegance of the Weimar minister-poet.

This contented and serene existence had, however, but a short duration. When only fifteen months had flown, Lessing's wife, together with the child she had for a few hours entrusted to him, was snatched from his tenacious arms. He bore himself under this staggering blow with wonderful self-control. Even to his favourite brother he did not give vent

to his emotion; he could only exclaim, "My wife is dead! and I have now gone through this experience also. I am glad that many more such experiences cannot be in store for me." That this is not callousness may be seen by a reference to another letter, in which there is one of the most powerful and perfectly-restrained expressions of the bitterness of grief to be found in all literature:—

My pleasure was but brief, and I lost him so unwillingly, this son! For he had so much understanding! so much understanding! Do not suppose that the few hours of my fatherhood have made me an ape of a father. I know what I say. Was it not understanding that they had to drag him into the world with iron tongs?—that he so soon suspected the evil of it? Was it not understanding that he seized the first opportunity to get away from it? And the little rascal tears his mother from me with him!

Lessing survived his wife only three years, laying down his well-worn tools at the early age of fifty-two. These last years, which, though sad enough, gave new proof of Lessing's self-control and instinct of fidelity to the claims of life, are eventful only with respect to his literary work. His occupations in the old library had naturally led to the study of theological questions, and henceforth his literary activity was directed to the furtherance of what he considered to be sounder and juster views of Christianity and of religion in general. The celebrated *Wolfenbüttel Fragments* and the more familiar dramatic poem, *Nathan the Wise*, alike illustrate these aims.

Our brief sketch of Lessing's life may suffice to show that there was much in the man to command admiration. To those who will look closely at him, he presents many a rare and noble trait, and appears in the end as one of the worthiest and at the same time one of the most engaging characters. Nothing can be more refreshing and stimulating than to stand awhile in imagination in presence of this ever-hopeful, ever-aspiring nature. Lessing (though a learner from Leibnitz) was by no means an unreflecting optimist. We have already quoted one expression of a deep and bitter sense of life's evil, and his writings contain many remarks on life and happiness pitched in the Voltairian key, as, for example:—"It certainly requires art to persuade ourselves that we are happy, but then in what else does happiness consist than in such self-persuasion?" Yet, at bottom, Lessing was soundly convinced of the desirability of life. The well-known passage in which he sets the pursuit of truth above its attainment illustrates what was the real value of existence to him. With his eager, intellectual nature life could only be a good so long as it left him free to struggle towards the light. Lessing had a passion, and this passion necessarily ennobled life.

This enthusiasm for discovery throws light on Lessing's disposition to combat. This has been generally regarded as excessive. Yet it must be remembered that truth can only be reached through a frequent collision of ideas, and that an ardent aspiration for truth is pretty

certain to assume the form of a vigorous opposition to error. At the same time one may readily admit that Lessing keenly enjoyed the excitement of intellectual contest much as he enjoyed gambling, of which he somewhere says, "Tous les gens d'esprit aiment le jeu à la folie!" The tension of battle seemed necessary to excite all the vital force of Lessing's intellectual fibres.

What most strikes one in Lessing is his perfect self-control, a quality which enabled him to indulge in forms of excitement which would have been dangerous to weaker men. Thus when at Breslau he threw himself into a round of social gaieties; yet he always made these subordinate to his dominant purposes. It may perhaps be thought that Lessing was not naturally of an emotional temperament, and that, consequently, his self-restraint was an easy matter. It is perfectly true that he was defective in certain kinds of feeling. Thus he seems to have had no love of natural scenery, and all he tells us about music points to the conclusion that this art did not exert on him its deepest emotional spell. Yet Lessing had deep and tender feelings, which broke out now and again into expression, as in the short but eloquent lament over the loss of his gallant and cultivated friend Kleist. He only kept these emotions under due restriction, carefully avoiding every appearance of excessive feeling or sentimentality. In this respect Lessing reminds one of J. S. Mill, a writer who seems cold to the casual and superficial reader, but who discloses intense forces of emotion to those who look into his words long and studiously.

One of the greatest charms of Lessing's character is the absence of all self-consciousness, of all feeble *amour propre*. His absorption in his objective aims saved him from this. Moreover, his genial and kindly humour served as a second safeguard against this weakness. Lessing frequently tells us that there is no better preservative against the weaknesses and petty vices of human nature than laughter, and his own character illustrates the truth of this. His keen sense of the ludicrous which impartially played about his own character as well as that of others, saved him from a morbid brooding on himself even in his worst hours of depression, and helped to give to his character that element of moderation and proportion which, as we have remarked, is essentially Greek.

And now let us glance at Lessing's work in its permanent worth. This has been estimated very differently by different critics. While some have regarded his writings as of temporary value only, others would rank his larger productions among the best European classics. The true opinion seems to be that, while Lessing wrote much that had only a fugitive significance and utility, he enriched his literature with some of the most delightful and instructive of its masterpieces. In his writings the permanent and the transitory are no doubt often mixed up, but it is easy to extricate the more enduring elements.

The first thing that strikes the student of Lessing is the breadth and

variety of his work. As Hettner says, with a pardonable touch of national vanity, "Lessing stood in the first rank in all the larger struggles of development through which the German people became the most cultivated, and, intellectually, the freest people of the earth." Lessing relaid the foundations of literary criticism, and applied his principles, with the help of accurate scholarship, not only to classic writers, but also to the chief modern literatures. He contributed important elements to æsthetic theory, more especially the laws of poetry and of the visual arts. He did much to fashion the modern and more enlightened style of theological discussion. He seized, more fully than his predecessors, and gave clear expression to, some of our present conceptions of human history. In addition to all this, he produced a number of dramas, which claim a place among the great works of German literature.

Yet with all this wealth and variety of intellectual achievement, the writings of Lessing are united by one or two leading intentions. One might almost say that they all subserve one purpose, that of clear definition. To substitute lucid ideas for obscure ones, to illustrate accuracy of knowledge and soundness of argument in vivid contrast to their opposites, this aim shines through all his writings. It appears in one of his earliest essays, *Pope a Metaphysician*, a clever bit of satire, sent in to the Berlin Academy of Sciences on their offering a prize for a paper on Pope's *Metaphysical System*. Lessing's best literary criticism was plainly directed to this same end. His æsthetic construction, too, aimed at discriminating between confused regions of art, and at separating the true classic conception from the ignorant modern versions under which it had been buried. A like aim to distinguish between what is essential and non-essential appears in his theological writings. Finally, it may be said that even his dramatic creations had as their object the setting-up of a true and faithful picture of human nature over against the inaccurate representations then in vogue. Thus there is a continuity in Lessing's varied work, each new branch being but the following out into a fresh region of the same dominant intellectual impulses.

Of Lessing's real magnitude we can only judge when we study his writings in connection with the previous condition of German literature. Each of the English biographies helps one to understand this aspect of Lessing's work. The reader feels that much excuse is to be made for Frederick the Great when he refused Lessing an appointment, on the ground that he was but one more example of the uncouth German pedant. Before Lessing there was hardly such a thing as good German writing, and Frederick showed good taste in going to French sources for his ideas and his culture. Even we, at this far-off point of view, feel something oppressive and choking in the atmosphere surrounding Klopstock and his weaker admirers, and Gottsched and his school, not to speak of the smaller fry, whose names have only come down to us because Lessing had occasion to take notice of them. The fact is, that

the German people, at the time Lessing appeared, had no culture, though the aspiration for it was arising and showing itself in the taste of a few for French literature.

More than this, Lessing had to contend not only with the inertia resulting from a long-reigning intellectual stagnation, but also with active opposition. His chief obstacle was the clergy, who were the foes not only of toleration in religion, but also of the theatre, the domain of art dearest to Lessing. The stage (says Adolf Stahr) was at that time a real horror to all pious minds, and even in the domain of the king of the Illumination the clergy preached from their pulpits against Peter Hülferding, the first Prussian founder of a theatre, who had been privileged by the king himself upon his accession to the throne.

In spite of these enormous difficulties, Lessing succeeded in awakening a genuine feeling for literature, and in setting the fashion of a higher kind of production. His work was of necessity to a large extent purely critical and destructive. Of this we need not speak. It has its interest for every student of literature, and even to others the sulphurous air of battle which surrounds nearly all of Lessing's critical writings will lend to these a certain fascination. Yet its intrinsic value has disappeared. This remark applies to much of the excellent work contained in the literary and antiquarian letters. Not that these and similar writings are simply negative in their results. The critical and the productive impulses were too intimately blended in Lessing for him to write anything that was simply destructive. And the writings just referred to must always be remarkable as one of the first contributions to the modern historical mode of appreciation. It is only because negative criticism preponderates in these works that their permanent value is so slight.

It is quite otherwise with Lessing's distinctly constructive works—that is to say, those in which the elucidation of correct principles preponderates over destructive criticism. Their value is great, even for us of to-day, with our fuller knowledge and more mature capacity of judgment.

To Lessing the highest form of literature was the drama, and his most elaborate constructive criticism has to do with this department of art. The results of his reading and reflection are embodied in the *Hamburg Dramaturgy*, a work of which English readers have, up to now, known little, if anything, since the only account of it in our literature is contained in a recent volume of miscellaneous essays (by Mr. J. Sully). In this series of papers Lessing did much to define the aims of true dramatic art. Although the ostensible purpose was a temporary one—namely, to overthrow the influence of the French drama and its theory, and to re-expound the doctrine contained in Aristotle's *Poetics*—it contains much original reflection, and is an important contribution to æsthetic theory. In it may be found some of the most pregnant suggestions respecting the art of good acting. What, for instance, can

be finer than these observations on the different modes of delivering moral reflections?—

If the situation is quiet, the mind of the speaker should seem to supply itself, through the moral truth, with a new impetus; he should appear to make general remarks on its happiness or its duties, simply for the purpose of enjoying this happiness the more intensely, or of observing these duties the more willingly through the very fact of this universality. Should the situation, however, be an agitating one, the spectator should feel that the speaker is recovering himself, by help of the moral reflection, from his momentary self-forgetfulness. The spectator should see that the speaker is desirous of giving to his passions the appearance of reason, and to his stormy exclamations the aspect of deliberate conclusions.

What Lessing did in the *Dramaturgy* to define and illustrate the principles of dramatic poetry is of very unequal value. To a large extent this has worth only as a clearing up of the meaning of Aristotle. Thus Lessing seeks to show, in opposition to French writers, that the fear and pity—which, according to Aristotle, are the proper effects of tragedy—are not separate moods, either of which can be produced by its appropriate kind of tragic action, but two aspects of one mood, both of which are necessarily excited in the spectator by every great tragedy. Lessing did good service, too, in giving to the classic “unities” an intelligible meaning. Yet in this part of his work our author hardly did more than clear the ground of false and inadequate views.

It is plain that Lessing's mind is here hampered by a too exclusive consideration of the Greek drama. It is, no doubt, true that he knew Shakspeare as well as many a later English dramatist, and that the *Dramaturgy* first made known to Germans England's greatest poet. Yet we are disposed to side with Hettner rather than with Guhrauer and Stahr, and to say that so far from “reconciling the idea of romantic poetry with the classic notion of beauty,” Lessing “never penetrated into the innermost secret of Shakspeare,” but “just because both Shakspeare and antique tragedy were equally removed from the French drama, identified these two.” As Hettner and others have shown, what Lessing missed seeing in the modern drama is the relation of the fault or defect of character in the tragic hero to the resulting catastrophe. Lessing took Aristotle's view of this moral defect as a feature of character necessary to the production in the spectator of fear and pity; he did not see that now we have done away with supernatural agencies and the *Deus ex machina*, a certain element of wrong-doing is the necessary pre-condition of a natural and self-sufficient tragic action.

All this we may admit, and much more on which Mr. Sime insists. Yet, with its many defects, and mere fragment as it is, Lessing's *Hamburg Dramaturgy* is full of ripe reflection and pregnant suggestion. Nobody who wants to have a thorough understanding of the principles of the drama can afford to leave it unread. Although it is throughout Aristotelian in its spirit and aim—for Lessing's accurate and thoroughly scientific mind was in close sympathy with the most scientific Greek intellect—it is anything but a mere reproduction of Aristotle's ideas.

It carries on and expands Aristotle's method of analysis, and ever and again reaches unforeseen results.

Among the most valuable of these is the clear separation of the ends of art and morality. Lessing's thoroughly Greek moderation showed itself in nothing more conspicuously than in his equal respect for liberty and correctness in art. In the *Dramaturgy*, each of these aims is manifest. While he insists on certain inviolable principles of dramatic art, he claims for her perfect freedom from ethical control. The purification (*κάθαρσις*) which tragedy effects is not moral; it is simply the correction of an excess or deficiency of emotion. So the laughter of comedy (*Lachen*) is perfectly distinct from the contemptuous ridicule (*Verlachen*) which is punitive, and aims at a moral effect. Indirectly, indeed, by bringing about a healthy state of feeling, the drama is capable of moralising the spectator; but this effect must never be consciously aimed at by the poet.

The *Dramaturgy* is a fragment, and far from satisfying on the topics it touches. The *Laokoon*, on the other hand, though, strictly speaking, a fragment too, is more systematic and complete, as far as it goes. This work is better known to English readers, and we need not dwell long on its features.

Here, again, we are impressed by the dominant intellectual spirit of the man. The purpose of Lessing is clearly to distinguish, to mark off more sharply the ends of visual art and poetry, and, in so doing, to claim a greater liberty of action for his favourite art. We do not now regard poetry as a substitute for direct pictorial representation of visible objects, even though, perhaps, we are rather too fond of talking about "word-painting." Hence some of the teaching of the *Laokoon* has lost its meaning and purpose. Yet, as a whole, this work must remain a permanent prose classic. It will owe its immortality, first of all, perhaps, to its delightful form, to that method of elucidating general principles from concrete instances which has much the same charm that belongs to George Eliot's psychological treatment of the novel. In addition to this, the *Laokoon*, with all its faults, is a lasting contribution to æsthetic theory. As a systematic attempt to show how the aims of the different arts are limited by the medium they employ, Lessing's work marks a new epoch in the science of criticism.* Moreover, in his handling of the nature and aims of poetry, the art he knew perfectly, Lessing is always right, and generally richly instructive. In his interpretation of Homer and Virgil he invariably shows true poetic feeling and analytic penetration.

It is only when he takes up "painting" (*die Malerei*)—under which term he oddly enough lumps together sculpture and painting—that

* The originality of Lessing's work is hardly affected by the fact referred to by Hettner, that its leading idea is foreshadowed by Moses Mendelssohn in his Essay *Betrachtungen über die Quellen und die Verbindungen der schönen Künste*.

Lessing betrays defective knowledge and an unsteady hand. All this is acknowledged by his most ardent admirers, not excepting Stahr himself. Mr. Sime has gathered up the most forcible objections urged by modern critics against Lessing's definition of the visual arts. All must admit that if the critic's views of the drama were warped by a too exclusive attention to Greek models, his theory of sculpture and painting was still more marred by this narrowness of vision. As Hettner remarks, all that Lessing says about painting, in its proper sense, is based on the fragmentary knowledge of classic art derivable from extant mural decorations, more especially those of Pompeii. His theory of pictorial art is sufficiently condemned by the fact that he rejects landscape-painting, genre, portraiture, and the greater part of historical painting, as wanting in the essentials of true ideal art. Even his theory of sculpture, as based on Greek works, suffers from a want of knowledge respecting the various periods and phases of Greek art.

Here, then, Lessing seems, for once, to contradict his true aim, the greatest possible liberty of art. Here the feeling for correctness is clearly in excess of the love of freedom. How are we to account for this? The answer is easy. Lessing, in this instance, ventured into a field that was all but unknown to him. He lacked the cultivated eye both for the manifold beauty of Nature and for the superb achievements of modern pictorial art. Hettner observes that while Lessing's notes and letters, written during his travels in Italy—long after the *Laokoon* was published—are full of allusions to libraries, &c., they make no reference to natural scenery or to pictures. More than this, Lessing ventured to theorise about art with the scantiest means at his disposal. As Nicolai observed, the critic for once forgot his wholesome rule of starting from a basis of experience, from some actual work of art. Stahr says it is doubtful whether Lessing had seen even a *cast* of the very group about which the *Laokoon* is written. His means of studying the various developments of Greek plastic art were very meagre. The wonder is, that with all these disqualifications and hindrances Lessing was able to do what he did.

And Lessing did accomplish something even for the better understanding of visual art. This is proved well enough by the fact that among painters and sculptors—English as well as German—are to be found some of the most assiduous readers of Lessing. A work penned by one, not himself an artist or endowed with special visual sensibility, and with the most inadequate knowledge of the details of art, has nevertheless been recognised by the competent few as a real contribution to art-theory. In one sense, then, one may say that the *Laokoon* is Lessing's greatest success. It proves the exceeding versatility and subtlety of his mind, and its high degree of general feeling for artistic beauty. Lessing tried to guess what visual art ought to be according to his general principles, and he was very nearly right.

Lessing's theory does, in spite of its narrow basis, roughly lay down

certain broad principles which every sculptor and painter will be the better for remembering. Of these we may mention the idea that the permanent rather than the momentary supplies the best material for visual art, and that, owing to its immediate and vivid mode of presentation, this department of art is much more restricted in the admission of the gross and repellent than the poetic arts. These ideas are, no doubt, pressed too far by Lessing himself, yet they are nothing less than discoveries in æsthetic science. After all, the principles of art are not rigidly universal truths which know of no exceptions; but simply rough formulas which gather up the most common conditions of æsthetic delight. If Lessing's *Laokoon* is read in the light of this truth, we shall hardly attach the importance which Mr. Sime seems to attach to the fact that all of Lessing's rules have sometimes been violated in artistic practice.

We have spoken of Lessing's work in concrete criticism, and have followed him into the higher intellectual sphere of the general science of criticism, or the theory of the fine arts. In order to complete our survey, we should have to watch this energetic spirit soaring still higher into the region of abstract reflection, philosophy and theology. Of this side of his activity, however, the present occasion is not the one to say much.

We have seen that Lessing's literary criticism, as, for example, the masterly vindication of Horace, illustrated his ability to project himself, so to speak, on the historical plane, and to realise modes of feeling and social conditions widely different from those of his own age. This power of counteracting the effects of the historical perspective may be said to underlie our modern conceptions of human development. In Lessing, too, it became the starting-point for a thoroughly modern view of history. In *The Education of the Human Race* we have the idea expressed, in a theological guise, it is true, that man's present intellectual and moral attainments have been slowly acquired through many ages by a gradual process of growth. Lessing was hardly the first to seize the idea of human progress; a glance at Mr. Flint's *Philosophy of History* will show that; but he gave new form to this conception, and made it more like the idea of the modern evolutionist. In so doing, he prepared the way for Herder, whose principal work appeared four years after Lessing's, and for Kant and his followers.

Lessing did very little of original work in the way of abstract philosophy. His philosophical ideas were mostly derived from Leibnitz and Spinoza, the latter of whom he first made known to German thinkers. Now, in the former, the idea of development, of a gradual perfection of existence, is one of the most conspicuous features, while in Spinoza, as Mr. F. Pollock has shown, there are latent some of the radical ideas of the modern evolutionist. Little wonder, then, that Lessing now and again comes so near seizing the conception of evolution as a whole. It is easy, of course, to exaggerate the anticipations of new

ideas, and German writers are just now absurdly busy in trying to discover all the essential features of Mr. Darwin's theory of evolution in writers like Herder and Kant. It is hardly less absurd, perhaps, when Guhrauer and Stahr tell us that in Lessing's thoroughly Leibnitzian conception of the world, as unfolded in the fragment *Das Christenthum der Vernunft* and elsewhere, we have anticipated "the great principle of the modern view of nature in its universality." Yet it is none the less true that Lessing did work in the direction of our new theory of the world. This tendency appears most conspicuously in another fragment *Dass mehr als fünf Sinne für den Menschen sein können* ("That more than five senses are possible for man"). The argument is clearly based on the Leibnitzian hypothesis of simple beings or monads; it goes beyond Leibnitz, however, in seizing the idea of a gradual organic development of the race, and of the possibility of a further ascent in the degree of organisation in the future.

If the evolutionist is not a tolerant man, he ought to be. The very foundation of his doctrine is that human ideas are nothing fixed, but are in a constant state of becoming, and that every stage of this process is strictly related to organic and other conditions. The only thing about which an evolutionist should be allowed to dogmatise is the truth of the doctrine of evolution itself, though even here he must not forget that his way of conceiving the process by which things come to be what they are is closely related to his present degree of development and stage of knowledge. Lessing, as we have seen, adopted the historical view of human ideas and institutions, and his writings contain, perhaps, the finest plea for toleration ever penned. If anybody ever had clear convictions and fixed principles it was Lessing; yet this same man had a more vivid perception than any of his predecessors of the essential relativity of truth and of the dependence of human ideas on the social conditions, &c. of the time. This idea underlies his theological writings, including *The Education of the Human Race*. Lessing's theory of toleration is not systematically argued out, as is Milton's idea, yet it is a thoroughly reasoned conception. In addition to this, it received a poetic expression in *Nathan the Wise*, which has never been equalled or even approached.

The mention of this poem naturally leads us to consider Lessing in a second aspect. Of the worth of his critical and scientific thought there can be no doubt; but what are we to say of his merits as a creative poet? Lessing's claims to this title rest on his dramatic writings, for his youthful lyrics are, as Mr. Sime observes, cold and unelevated, and his epigrams (*Sinngedichte*), which he kept on writing throughout life, are lacking in originality if not in literary charm. What then are we to say of Lessing as a dramatist? Shall we take his own modest opinion of himself, expressed at the close of the *Dramaturgy*, "I am neither actor nor poet!" or shall we agree with those who rank Lessing's chief dramas among the masterpieces of art?

There is no doubt that Lessing was a critic before he was a poet.

This he knew well enough himself. Further, it is clear that his dramas, like his epigrams and fables, are consciously worked out on the basis of pre-established principles. But does it follow from this that they are to be regarded as mere grammatical exercises, added in order to illustrate general rules? This question raises interesting problems respecting the nature of poetic invention, and of its connection with reflection. Into these we cannot here enter. We may assume that good poetry, even if not the best, has been produced by this reflective kind of work, and the question is reduced to the form: "Are Lessing's dramas real works of art?"

Of these dramas only three claim our attention, viz., *Minna von Barnhelm*, *Emilia Galotti*, and *Nathan the Wise*. Of these, the first and last at least have, so far, held a distinguished place on the German stage.

If Lessing had never written anything but *Minna von Barnhelm*, he would have proved himself a dramatist of no mean order. This delightful comedy, though strictly related, as Goethe observes, to the circumstances of the time of its production, is now as fresh and impressive as when it was written. To see it well put on the German stage is one of the intellectual treats of a visit to Germany. The action is quick and stimulating, the plot sufficiently intricate and clearly developed, and the dialogue crisp and bright. It may bear comparison with some of the best English comedies of the last century. The character of Minna herself has at once the charm of Shakspeare's Portia and of Goldsmith's Miss Hardcastle; she is sensible, dignified, and admirable, yet, at the same time, gaily mischievous; and the other characters, Tellheim, Just, &c., are excellently portrayed. There is in this play no trace of an effort to construct according to fixed rule: it flows on spontaneously and is alive with true poetic inspiration.

With *Emilia von Galotti* the case is different. Here we have a modern tragedy consciously thought out in relation to the different conditions of ancient and of modern life. And the effect is decidedly a lame one. It has, no doubt, many excellences, upon which Lessing's apologist, Adolf Stahr, expands. But it lacks the characteristic excellence of modern tragedy, the presence of an unmistakable element of necessity binding together the various parts of the action and the resulting catastrophe. The best critics will hold against Stahr that the motive of the play is essentially classic, and wholly out of place in a modern tragedy. Emilia's fear—which has puzzled every critic from Goethe onwards—remains unintelligible, and yet it is only this which necessitates the closing bloody act. Both Mr. Sime and Miss Zimmern clearly point out these defects of the play.

There remains *Nathan the Wise*, a dramatic poem, written with the express purpose of setting forth a moral idea, in which dialogue preponderates over incident, and of which the *dénouement* is uniformly condemned as prosaic and dissatisfying. What shall be said of it? Does

not Lessing here fly in the face of his own principles and subordinate art to morality?

A distinction must be drawn between inculcating a moral truth and embodying a moral idea. In *Nathan the Wise* Lessing does the latter, and not the former. His aim is to present a perfect ideal embodiment of the spirit of toleration. Is it legitimate to make the presentation of a beautiful character the aim of a drama? Everything is right in art which produces a satisfying impression, and judged in this way, *Nathan the Wise* is a powerful drama. Whoever has seen this noble character adequately represented, as, for example, by the veteran Döhring of Berlin, will admit that we have in this poem the material of a worthy dramatic impression. Art, Lessing tells us, may and should moralise us, though this ought not to be its ruling intention; and whoever reads, or better, sees *Nathan the Wise*, must be elevated in spirit by the communion with this wise and noble-hearted Jew. The Germans love this drama, and place it beside *Faust* as one of their two finest classics. Their estimate of its worth is confirmed by the judgment of more than one foreign nation. In the face of such evidence we may be sure that it is a genuine work of art, however difficult it may be to make it fit into our ordinary classifications.

In *Nathan the Wise* the diverging streams of Lessing's intellectual activity become reunited. It is the joint product of poetic impulse, critical reflection, and theological and philosophical thought. In this ideal character we have the ripest fruit of Lessing's intellectual and moral nature. In the clear-sighted Jew, with his wide knowledge of man, his calm self-restraint, his large charity, his reverence for our essential humanity as distinguished from its accidental forms, in this Nathan, who stands out from and overtops his narrow-minded race, Lessing might almost be said to give us unwittingly an enlarged image of himself as he appears against the background of a narrow and unappreciative age.

Orpheus and Eurydice.

THE LESSON OF A BAS-RELIEF.

NO GREEK myth has a greater charm for our mind than that of Orpheus and Eurydice. In the first place, we are told by mythologists that it is a myth of the dawn, one of those melancholy, subdued interpretations of the eternal, hopeless separation of the beautiful light of dawn and the beautiful light of day, which forms the constantly recurring tragedy of nature, as the tremendous struggle between light and darkness forms her never-ending epic, her *Iliad* and *Nibelungenlied*. There is more of the purely artistic element in these myths of the dawn than in the sun myths. Those earliest poets, primitive peoples, were interested spectators of the great battle between day and night. The sun-hero was truly their Achilles, their Siegfried. In fighting, he fought for them. When he chained up the powers of darkness the whole earth was hopeful and triumphant; when he sank down dead, a thousand dark, vague, hideous monsters were let loose on the world, filling men's hearts with sickening terror; the solar warfare was waged for and against men. The case is quite different with respect to the dawn tragedy. If men were moved by that it was from pure, disinterested sympathy. The dawn and the day were equally good and equally beautiful; the day loved the dawn, since it pursued her so closely, and the dawn must have loved the day in return, since she fled so slowly and reluctantly. Why, then, were they forbidden ever to meet? What mysterious fate condemned the one to die at the touch of the other—the beloved to elude the lover, the lover to kill the beloved? This sad, sympathising question, which the primitive peoples repeated vaguely and perhaps scarce consciously, day after day, century after century, at length received an answer. One answer, then another, then yet another, as fancy took more definite shapes. Yes, the dawn and the morning are a pair of lovers over whom hangs an irresistible, inscrutable fate—Cephalus and Procris, Alceste and Admetus, Orpheus and Eurydice.

And this myth of Orpheus and Eurydice is to our mind the most charming of the tales born of that beautiful, disinterested sympathy for the dawn and the morning, the one in which the subdued, mysterious pathos of its origin is most perfectly preserved, in which no fault of infidelity or jealousy, no final remission of doom, breaks the melancholy unity of the story. In it we have the real equivalent of that gentle, melancholy fading away of light into light, of tint into tint. Orpheus loses Eurydice as the day loses the dawn, because he loves her; she has issued from Hades as the dawn has issued from darkness; she melts

away beneath her lover's look even as the dawn vanishes beneath the look of the day.

The origin of the myth of Orpheus and Eurydice is beautiful; the myth itself, as evolved by spontaneous poetry, is still more so, and more beautiful still are the forms which have successively been lent it by the poet, the sculptor and the musician. Its own charm adds to that of its embodiments, and the charm of its embodiments adds in return to its own, a complete circle of beautiful impressions, whose mysterious, linked power it is impossible to withstand. The first link in the chain are those lines of Virgil's, for which we would willingly give ten *Æneids*, those grandly simple lines, half hidden in the sweet luxuriance of the fourth book of the *Georgics*, as the exquisitely chiselled fragment of some sylvan altar might lie half hidden among the long grasses and flowers, beneath the flowering bays and dark ilexes, broken shadows of boughs and yellow gleams of sunlight flickering fantastically across the clear and supple forms of the sculptured marble:

Jamque podem referens casus evaserat omnes,
 Redditaque Eurydice superas veniebat ad auras,
 Pone sequens, namque hanc dederat Proserpina legem,
 Quum subita incautum dementia cepit amantem,
 Ignoscenda quidem, scirent si ignoscere manes;
 Restitit, Eurydicenque suam jam luce sub ipsa,
 Immemor, heu! victusque animi respexit . . . Ibi omnis
 Effusus labor, atque immitis rupta tyranni
 Fœdera, terque fragor stagnis auditus Avernis.
 Illa: Quis et me, inquit, miseram, et te perdidit, Orpheu,
 Quis tantus furor? En iterum crudelia retro
 Fata vocant, conlitque natantia lumina somnus.
 Jamque vale! Feror ingenti circumdata nocte,
 Invalidasque tibi tendens, heu! non tua, palmas.
 Dixit et ex oculis subito, ceu fumus in auras
 Commixtus tennes, fugit diversa; neque illum,
 Pressantem nequidquam umbras, et multa volentem
 Dicere, præterea vidit. . . .

These lines suggest a bas-relief to us, because a real bas-relief is really connected with them in our mind, and this connection led to a curious little incident in our æsthetic life which is worth narrating. The bas-relief in question is a sufficiently obscure piece of Greek workmanship, one of those mediocre, much degraded works of art with which Roman galleries abound, and among which, though left unnoticed by the crowd that gathers round the Apollo, or the Augustus, or the Discobolus, we may sometimes divine a repetition of some great lost work of antiquity, some feeble reflection of lost perfection. It is let into the wall of a hall of the Villa Albani, where people throng past it in search of the rigid, pseudo-Attic Antinous. And it is as simple as the verses of Virgil: merely three figures slightly raised out of the flat, blank background, Eurydice between Orpheus and Hermes. The three figures stand distinctly apart and in a row. Orpheus touches Eurydice's veil, and her hand rests on his shoulder, while the other hand, drooping supine, is grasped by

Hermes. There is no grouping, no embracing, no violence of gesture—nay, scarcely any gesture at all; yet for us there is in it a whole drama, the whole pathos of Virgil's lines. Eurydice has returned, she is standing beneath our sun—*jam luce sub ipsa*—but for the last time. Orpheus lets his lyre sink, his head drooping towards her—*multa volens dicere*—and holds her veil, speechless. Eurydice, her head slightly bent, raises her eyes full upon him. In that look is her last long farewell:—

*Jamque vale, feror ingenti circumdata nocte,
Invalidas tibi tendens, heu! non tua, palmas.*

Behind Eurydice stands Hermes, the sad though youthful messenger of the dead. He gently takes her hand; it is time; he would fain stay and let the parting be delayed for ever, but he cannot. Come, we must go. Eurydice feels it; she is looking for the last time at Orpheus, her head and step are prepared to turn away—*jamque vale*. Truly this sad, sympathising messenger of Hades is a beautiful thought, softening the horror of the return to death.

And we look up again at the bas-relief, the whole story of Orpheus laying firmer hold of our imagination; but as our eyes wander wistfully over the marble they fall for the first time upon a scrap of paper pasted at the bottom of it, a wretched, unsightly, scarce legible rag, such as insult some of the antiques in this gallery, and on it is written:—

Antiope coi figli Anfione e Zeto.

A sudden, perplexed wonder fills our mind—wonder succeeded by amusement. The bunglers, why they must have glued the wrong label on the bas-relief. Of course! and we turn out the number of the piece in the catalogue, the solemn, portly catalogue, full of references to Fea, and Visconti, and Winckelmann. Number—yes, here it is, here it is. What, again?

Antiope urging her sons, Amphion and Zethus, to avenge her by the murder of Dirce.

We put down the catalogue in considerable disgust. What, they don't see that that is Orpheus and Eurydice! They dare, those soulless pedants, to call *that* Antiope with Amphion and Zethus! Ah!—and with smothered indignation we leave the gallery. Passing through the little ilex copse near the villa, the colossal bust of Winckelmann meets our eyes, the heavy, clear-featured, strong-browed head of him who first revealed the world of ancient art. And such profanation goes on, as it were, under his eyes, in that very Villa Albani which he so loved, where he first grew intimate with the antique! What would he have said to such heartless obtuseness?

We have his great work, the work which no amount of additional learning can ever supersede, because no amount of additional learning will ever enable us to feel antique beauty more keenly and profoundly than he did—we have his great work on our shelf, and as soon as we are back at home, our mind still working on Orpheus and Eurydice, we take it down and search for a reference to our bas-relief. We search all through the index in vain; then turn over the pages where it may possibly be

mentioned, again in vain; no Orpheus and Eurydice. Ah! "A bas-relief at the Villa Albani"—let us see what that may be. "A bas-relief," &c., &c.—horror beyond words! The bas-relief—our bas-relief—deliberately set down as Antiope with Amphion and Zethus—set down as Antiope with Amphion and Zethus by Winckelmann himself!

Yes, and he gravely states his reasons for so doing. The situation is evidently one of great hesitation; there is reluctance on the one hand, persuasion on the other. Moreover, the female figure is that of a mourner, of a supplicant, draped and half veiled as it is; the figure with the lyre, in the Thracian or Thessalian costume, must necessarily be Amphion, while the other in the loose tunic of a shepherd, must as evidently be his brother, Zethus; and if we put together these facts, we cannot but conclude that the subject of the bas-relief is, as previously stated, Antiope persuading Amphion and Zethus to avenge her on Dirce.

The argument is a good one, there can be no denying it, although it is very strange that Winckelmann should not have perceived that the bas-relief represented Orpheus and Eurydice. But after all, we ask ourselves, as the confusion in our minds gradually clears up: how do we know that this *is* Orpheus and Eurydice and not Antiope and her sons? How? and the answer rises up indignantly, Because we see to the contrary; because we know that it must be Orpheus and Eurydice; because we feel morally persuaded that it is. But a doubt creeps up. We are morally convinced, but whence this conviction? Did we come to the bas-relief not knowing what it was, and did we then cry out, overcome by its internal evidence, that it must represent Orpheus and Eurydice? Did we ourselves examine and weigh the evidence as Winckelmann did? And we confess to ourselves that we did none of these things. But how, then, explain this intense conviction, and the emotion awakened in us by the bas-relief? Yet that emotion was genuine; and now we have little by little to own that we had read in a book by M. Charles Blanc that such and such a bas-relief at the Villa Albani represented Orpheus and Eurydice, and that we had accepted the assertion blindly, unscrutinisingly, and coming to the bas-relief with that idea, did not dream of examining into its truth. And did we not then let our mind wander off from the bas-relief to the story of Orpheus, and make a sort of variation on Virgil's poem, and mistake all this for the impression received from the bas-relief itself? May this not be the explanation of our intense conviction? It seems as if it were so. We have not only lost our sentimental pleasure in the bas-relief, but we have been caught by ourselves (most humiliating of all such positions) weaving fantastic stories out of nothing at all, decrying great critics for want of discernment when we ourselves had shown none whatever.

It may have been childish, but it was natural to feel considerable bitterness at this discovery; you may smile, but we had lost something precious, the idea that art was beginning to say more to us than to others, the budding satisfaction of being no longer a stranger to the

antique, and this loss was truly bitter; nay, in the first bitterness of the discovery, we had almost taken an aversion to the bas-relief, as people will take an aversion to the things about which they know themselves to have been foolish. However, as this feeling subsided, we began to reflect that the really worthy and dignified course would be to attain to real certainty on the subject, and finding that our recollection of the bas-relief was not so perfectly distinct as to authorise a final decision, we determined coolly to examine the work once more, and to draw our conclusions on the spot.

The following Tuesday, therefore, we started betimes for the Villa Albani, intending to have a good hour to ourselves before the arrival of the usual gaping visitors. The gallery was quite empty; we drew one of the heavy chairs robed in printed leather before the bas-relief, and settled ourselves deliberately to examine it. We were now strangely unbiassed on the subject, for the reaction against our first positive mood, and the frequent turning over one view, then the other, had left in us only a very strong critical curiosity, the desire to unravel the tangled reason of our previous unexplained conviction. Of course we found that our memory had failed in one or two particulars, that the image preserved in our mind was not absolutely faithful, but we could discover nothing capable of materially influencing our views. We looked at the bas-relief again and again; strictly speaking, there is in it nothing beyond a woman standing between two men, of whom the one touches her veil, and the other, to whom she turns her back, grasps her right hand, while her left hand rests lightly on the shoulder of the first male figure; so far there is reason for saying that the bas-relief represents either Orpheus and Eurydice, or Antiope and her sons; indeed, all that could fairly be said is that it represents a woman between two men, with one of whom she appears to be in more or less tender converse, whereas she is paying no attention to the other, who is taking her passively drooping hand. There is, however, the additional circumstance that one of the men holds a lyre and is dressed in loose trowsers and mitre-like head-dress, while the other man wears only a short tunic, leaving the arms and legs bare, and that his head is uncovered and shows closely-cut curly locks; the woman being entirely draped, and her head partially covered with a veil. Now, we know that this costume of trowsers and mitre-shaped head-gear was that of certain semi-barbarous peoples connected with the Greeks, amongst others the Thracians and Phrygians, while the simple tunic and the close-cut locks were distinctive of Hellenic youths, especially those admitted to gymnastic training. Moreover, we happen to know that Orpheus was a Thracian, and that Hermes, on the other hand, although in one capacity conductor of the souls to Hades, was also the patron divinity of the Greek *ephebi*, of the youths engaged in gymnastic exercises. Now if we put together these several facts, we perceive great likelihood of these two figures—the one in the dress of a barbarian, which Orpheus is known

to have been, and holding a lyre, which Orpheus is known to have played, and the other in the dress of a Greek *ephebus*, which Hermes is known to have worn—of these two figures really being intended for Orpheus and Hermes. At the same time, we must recollect that Amphion also is known to have worn this barbaric costume and to have played the lyre, while his brother, Zethus, is equally known to have worn the habit of the *ephebus*; so that Winckelmann has quite as good grounds for his assertion as we have for ours. If only the sculptor had taken the trouble to give the figure in the tunic a pair of winged sandals or a caduceus, or a winged cap; then there could remain no doubt of his being Hermes, for it is a positive fact that no one except Hermes ever had these attributes; the doubt is owing to the choice of insufficiently definite and distinctive peculiarities. But, it now strikes us, all this is founded upon the supposition that we know that the barbarians wore trowsers and mitres, that Orpheus was a sort of barbarian, that Greek *ephebi* wore tunics and short-cut hair, that Hermes was a sort of *ephebus*, that moreover he was a conductor of souls; now, supposing we knew none or only some of these facts, which we certainly should not, if Classical dictionaries had not taught them us, how could we argue that this is Orpheus and that Hermes? Is the meaning of a work of art to depend on Lempriere and Dr. William Smith? At that rate the sculptor might as well have let alone all such distinctions, and merely written under one figure *Orpheus* or *Amphion*, whichever it might be, under the other *Hermes* or *Zethus*; this would not have pre-supposed more knowledge on our part, since it seems even easier to learn the Greek alphabet than the precise attributes of various antique gods and demigods, and then, too, no mistake would have been possible, we should have had no choice, the figure *must* be either Orpheus or Amphion, Hermes or Zethus, since the artist himself said so. But this would be an admission of the incapacity of the art or the artist, like the old device of writing—"This is a lion," "This is a horse;" well but, after all, how are we able to recognise a painted lion or a horse? is it not, thanks to previous knowledge, to our acquaintance with a live horse or live lion? if we had never seen either, could we say, "This is a lion," "That is a horse?" evidently not. But then most people can recognise a horse or a lion, while they cannot be expected to recognise a person they have never seen, especially a purely imaginary one; the case is evidently one of degree; if we had never seen a cow, and did not know that cows are milked, we should no more understand the meaning of a representation of cow-milking than we should understand the meaning of a picture of Achilles in Scyros if we knew nothing about Achilles. The comprehension of the subject of a work of art would therefore seem to require certain previous information; the work of art would seem to be unable to tell its story itself, unless we have the key to that story. Now this is not the case with literature; given the comprehension of the separate words, no further information is required to understand the meaning, the subject of prose,

or verse; Virgil's lines presuppose no knowledge of the story of Orpheus, they themselves give the knowledge of it. The difference, then, between the poem and the bas-relief is that the story is absolutely contained in the former, and not absolutely contained in the latter; the story of Orpheus is part of the organic whole, of the existence of the poem; the two are inseparable, since the one is formed out of the other; whereas the story of Orpheus is separate from the organic existence of the bas-relief, it is arbitrarily connected with it, and they need not co-exist. What then is the bas-relief? A meaningless thing, to which we have wilfully attached a meaning which is not part or parcel of it—a blank sheet of paper on which we write what comes into our head, and which itself can tell us nothing.

As we look up perplexedly at the bas-relief, which, after having been as confused, has now become well nigh as blank as our mind, we are startled by hearing our name from a well-known voice behind us. A young painter stands by our side, a creature knowing or thinking of very little beyond his pencils and brushes, serenely unconscious of literature and science in his complete devotion to art. A few trivial sentences are exchanged, during which we catch our friend's eye glancing at the bas-relief. "I never noticed that before," he remarks. "Do you know I like it better than anything else in this room? Strange that I should not have noticed it before."

"It is a very interesting work," we answer; adding, with purposely feigned decision, "Of course you see that it represents Orpheus and Eurydice, not Antiope and her sons."

The painter, whose instinctive impression on the point we have thus tried to elicit, seems wholly unmoved by this remark; the fact literally passes across his mind without in the least touching it.

"Does it? Ah, what a splendid mass of drapery! That grand, round fold and those small, fine vertical ones. I should like to make a sketch of that."

A sort of veil seems suddenly to fall off our mental eyes; these simple, earnest words, this intense admiration seem to have shed new light into our mind.

This fellow, who knows or cares apparently nothing whatever about either Orpheus or Antiope, has not found the bas-relief a blank; it has spoken for him, the clear, unmistakeable language of lines and curves, of light and shade, a language needing no interpreters, no dictionaries, and it has told him the fact, the fact depending on no previous knowledge, irrefutable and eternal, that it is beautiful. And as our eyes follow his, and we listen to his simple, unaffected, unpoetical exclamations of admiration at this combination of lines, or that bend of a limb, we recognise that if poetry has its unchangeable effects, its power which, in order to be felt, requires only the comprehension of words, art also has its unchangeable effects, its power, its supreme virtue, which all can feel who have eyes and minds that can see. The bas-relief does not necessarily tell us the story of Orpheus and Eurydice, as Virgil's lines do, that is

not inherent in its nature as in theirs ; but it tells us the fact of its beauty, and that fact is vital, eternal, and indissolubly connected with it.

To appreciate a work of art means, therefore, to appreciate that work of art itself, as distinguished from appreciating something outside it, something accidentally or arbitrarily connected with it ; to appreciate Virgil's lines means to appreciate his telling of the story of Orpheus, his choice of words and his metre ; to appreciate the bas-relief means to appreciate the combination of forms and lights and shades ; and a person who cared for Virgil's lines because they suggested the bas-relief, or for the bas-relief because it suggested Virgil's lines, would equally be appreciating neither, since his pleasure depended on something separate from the work of art itself.

Yet this is what constantly happens, and happens on account of two very simple and legitimate movements of the mind : that of comparison and that of association. Let us examine what we have called, for want of a more definite word, the movement of comparison. You are enjoying a work of art, plastic or musical ; what you enjoy is the work of art itself, the combination of lines, lights and shades and colours in the one case, the combination of modulations and harmonies in the other ; now, as this enjoyment means merely the pleasing activity of your visual and æsthetic, or acoustic and æsthetic organism, you instinctively wish to increase the activity in order to increase the pleasure ; the increase of activity is obtained by approximating as much as possible to the creative activity of the original artist, by going over every step that he has gone over, by creating the work of art over again in the intensity of appreciation. If it be a plastic work, you naturally produce your pencil and brushes and copy it ; if it be a musical composition, you naturally try and reproduce it by means of your voice or your instrument ; and you thus obtain the highest degree of æsthetical activity and pleasure compatible with mere appreciation. But supposing you can neither draw, nor sing, nor play ; supposing you have only another set of faculties, those dealing with thoughts and images, those of the artist in words, of the writer. How will you obtain that high degree of æsthetical activity, how will you go over the steps of the original creator ? You will find that words cannot copy the work of art, plastic or musical ; that lines and lights and shades, or modulations and harmonies, must be seen or heard to be appreciated ; that, in short, you have no means of absolutely reproducing what you have seen or heard ;—instinctively, unintentionally, unconsciously, you will seek for an equivalent for it ; you will try and produce with the means at your disposal something analogous to the work of art, you will obtain your æsthetic activity in another set of faculties ; not being able to draw or to sing, you will think and feel, and, in default of producing a copy, you will produce an equivalent. But the same result is not attainable by different means ; a painter, copying a statue, will produce not a statue but a picture ; a sculptor copying a picture will produce a model, not a sketch ; yet the difference between the *modus*

operandi of painting and sculpture is nothing compared with that between the *modus operandi* of art which appeals to the eye or the ear, and art which appeals direct to the mind; of art which deals with visible or audible shapes, and of art which deals with purely abstract thoughts and images. How much greater, then, must not also be the difference in the result! instead of a statue you have, not a picture, but a poem, a work of art of totally different nature from the one which you originally tried to reproduce. Instead of visual or audible forms, you have feelings and fancies; and if you compare your equivalent with the original work of art you will probably find that it has little in common with it; you had seen a beautifully chiselled head, and you say that you have perceived a beautiful emotion; you had heard a lovely modulation, and you have written that you witnessed a pathetic parting; instead of your eye and your ear, your imagination and feeling have been active, and the product of their activity is a special, separate one. So, in your desire to appreciate a work of art, you have, after a fashion, created a new one, good or bad, and having created it, there are a hundred chances against one that you will henceforward perceive your creation and not the original work; that you will no longer perceive lines or sounds, but fancies and feelings, in short, that instead of appreciating the work of art itself, you will appreciate merely your intellectual equivalent of it, that is to say, something which most distinctly and emphatically is *not* the work of art.

The process of association is even commoner: you have taken interest in some story, or some form, your mind has worked upon it; you are shown a work of art whose name, often nothing more, connects it with this story or poem, and your thoughts being full of the latter, you apply to the work of art the remarks you had made about the story or poem; you see in the work of art the details of that story or poem; you look at it as a mere illustration; very often, you do not look at it at all; for although your bodily eyes may be fixed on the picture or statue, your intellectual eyes are busy with some recollection or impression in your mind; it is the case of the bas-relief of the Villa Albani, of the pleasure received from Virgil's lines being reawakened by the mere circumstance of the bas-relief being called, rightly or wrongly, Orpheus and Eurydice; it is the story of a hundred interpretations of works of art, of people seeing a comic expression in a certain group at the Villa Ludovisi because they imagined it to represent Papirius and his mother, while other people found the same group highly tragic, because they fancied it represented Electra and Orestes; it is the old story of violent emotion, attributed to wholly unemotional music, because the words to which it is arbitrarily connected happen to be pathetic; the endless story of delusions of all sorts, of associations of feelings and ideas as accidental as those which make certain tunes or sights depress us because we happened to be in a melancholy mood when we first saw or heard them.

What becomes of the real, inherent effect of the work of art itself in the midst of such concatenations of fancies and associations? How can

we listen to its own magic speech, its language of lines and colours and sounds, when our mind is full of confused voices telling us of different and irrelevant things? Where, at such times, is our artistic appreciation, and what is it worth? Should we then, if such a thing were possible, forbid such comparisons, such associations? Should we voluntarily deprive ourselves of such pleasure as is not given by the work of art itself?

No, but we should restrain such impressions, we should, as far as we can, remain conscious of the fact that they are mere effects of comparison and association, that they are not the work of art, but something distinct from it, and that the work of art itself exists in the lines, tints, lights and shades of the picture or statue, in the modulations and harmonies of a composition, and that all the rest is gratuitously added by ourselves. Nay, we should remember that there could not even have been that very comparison, that very association if there had been no previous real artistic perception; that unless we had first cared for Virgil's Orpheus for its own sake, we could not afterwards have cared for the bas-relief on its account.

We confess that we have ourselves become instinctively jealous of such foreign causes of pleasure in art, jealous because we have been pained by their constant encroachment; the feeling may be an exaggerated one, but it is a natural reaction. We have thus caught ourselves almost regretting that pictures should have any subjects; we have sometimes felt that the adaptation of music to the drama is a sort of profanation; and all this because we have too often observed that the subject seemed to engross so much attention as to make people forget the picture, and that the drama made people misinterpret the music, and that criticism itself, instead of checking this tendency, has done much to further it. Yes, critics, grave and emphatic thinkers, have spoken as if the chief merit of the painter had consisted in clearly expressing some story, which in all probability was not worth expressing, some dull monkish legend which his genius alone could render tolerable; as if the chief aim of the composer were to follow the mazes of some wretched imbecile libretto, which has become endurable thanks only to his notes; as if the immortal were to be chained to the mortal, and mediocrity, inferiority, mere trumpery fact or trumpery utility were to bridle and bestride the divine hippogriff of art, and, like another Astolfo, fly up on its back into the regions of immortality. Artists themselves have been of this way of thinking, we cannot say of feeling, for, as long as they were true artists, their instinctive feelings must have propelled them in a very different direction. Gluck, that great dramatist, who was greatest when least dramatic, thought that music was made for the sake of the drama, that its greatest glory was to express the difference, as he himself wrote, between a princess and a waiting-maid, between a Spartan and a Phrygian, to follow the steps of a play as its humble retainer and commentator. Gluck composed his music for the sake of the dramas; but, O irony of art! the dramas are recollected only for the sake of his music.

Let the artist be humble, mistrustful of his own art, let him believe it to be subservient to something outside it, devote it magnanimously to some purpose of utility, or some expression of fact, sacrifice it throughout; it will be all in vain; if his work be excellent, it will subordinate all to itself, it will swallow up every other interest, throw into the shade every other utility.

One day, the Pope's banker, Agostino Chigi, came to Master Rafael of Urbino, and said to him—"I am building a little pleasure villa in which to entertain my friends. Baldassare Peruzzi has made the plans, Sebastiano del Piombo has designed the arabesques, Nanni da Udine will paint me the garlands of fruit and flowers; it must be perfection. You shall paint me the walls of the open hall looking out on the Tiber, that it may be a fit place wherein to sup and make merry with popes and cardinals and princes." "Very good," answered Rafael.

The object was to obtain a dining-hall, and the fresco was to be there merely as an ornament; but Rafael painted his *Galatea*, and behold, the hall could no longer be used as a dining-room; everyone crowded into it to see the fresco; the hall has now become a gallery, and the real property, less of its owners, who cannot make use of it, than of the whole world, who insists on entering it; the room now exists only for the sake of the fresco, yet the fresco was originally intended to exist only for it. This is the inevitable course of art; we call in beauty as a servant, and see, like some strange demon, it becomes the master; it may answer our call, but we have to do its bidding.

We have strayed far away from Orpheus and Eurydice, while thus following the train of ideas suggested by the story of the bas-relief. Yet we may return to the subject and use it as an illustration of our last remark. We have said much against the common tendency towards transporting on to a work of art an interest not originally due to it, because, by this means, we are apt to lose the interest which does belong to the work of art. But, if only each could get its due, each exert its power unimpaired, there could be nothing more delightful than thus to enjoy the joint effect of several works of art; not, according to the notion of certain aesthetic visionaries,—who do not see that singers cannot be living Greek statues nor librettists poets, nor scene-painters Poussins,—in one clumsy ambiguous monster spectacle, but in our minds, in our fancy; if, conscious of the difference between them, we could unite in one recollection the works of various arts: people the glades and dingles of Keats with the divinities we have seen in marble, play upon the reed of the Praxitelian faun the woodland melodies of Mozart's *Tamino*. It would thus be the highest reward for self-scrutinising æsthetic humility, for honest appreciation of each art for itself, for brave sacrifice of our own artistic whimsies and vanities, to enable us to bring up simultaneously the recollection of Virgil's nobly pathetic lines, of the exquisitely simple and supple forms of the bas-relief, of the grand and tender music of Gluck, and to unite them in one noble pageant of the imagination, evoked by the spell of those two names: Orpheus and Eurydice.

Hours in a Library.

NO. XVIII.—THE FIRST EDINBURGH REVIEWERS.

WHEN browsing at random in a respectable library, one is pretty sure to hit upon the early numbers of the *Edinburgh Review*, and prompted in consequence to ask oneself the question, what are the intrinsic merits of writing which produced so great an effect upon our grandfathers? The *Review*, we may say, has lived into a third generation. The last survivor of the original set has passed away; and there are but few relics even of that second galaxy of authors amongst whom Macaulay was the most brilliant star. One may speak, therefore, without shocking existing susceptibilities, of the *Review* in its first period, when Jeffrey, Sydney Smith, and Brougham were the most prominent names. A man may still call himself middle-aged and yet have a distinct memory of Brougham courting, rather too eagerly, the applause of the Social Science Association; of Jeffrey, as he appeared in his kindly old age, when he could hardly have spoken sharply of a Lake poet; and even of the last outpourings of the irrepressible gaiety of Sydney Smith. But the period of their literary activity is already so distant as to have passed into the domain of history. It is the same thing to say that it already belongs in some degree to the neighbouring or overlapping domain of fiction.

There is, in fact, already a conventional history of the early *Edinburgh Review*, repeated without hesitation in all literary histories and assumed in a thousand allusions, which becomes a little incredible when we take down the dusty old volumes, where dingy calf has replaced the original splendours of the blue and yellow, and which have inevitably lost much of their savour during more than half a century's repose. The story of the original publication has been given by the chief founders. Edinburgh, at the beginning of the century, was one of those provincial centres of intellectual activity which have an increasing difficulty in maintaining themselves against metropolitan attractions. In the last half of the eighteenth century, such philosophical activity as existed in the country seemed to have taken refuge in the northern half of the island. A set of brilliant young men, living in a society still proud of the reputation of Hume, Adam Smith, Reid, Robertson, Dugald Stewart, and other northern luminaries, might naturally be susceptible to the stimulus of literary ambition. In politics the most rampant Conservatism, rendered bitter by the recent experience of the French Revolution, exercised a sway in Scotland more undisputed and vigorous than it is now easy to understand. The younger men who

inclined to Liberalism, were naturally prepared to welcome an organ for the expression of their views. Accordingly a knot of clever lads (Smith was 31, Jeffrey 29, Brown 24, Horner 24, and Brougham 23), met in the third (not, as Smith afterwards said, the "eighth or ninth") story of a house in Edinburgh and started the journal by acclamation. The first number appeared in October 1802, and produced, we are told, an "electrical" effect. Its old humdrum rivals collapsed before it. Its science, its philosophy, its literature were equally admired. Its politics excited the wrath and dread of Tories and the exultant delight of Whigs. It was, says Cockburn, a "pillar of fire," a far-seen beacon suddenly lighted in a dark place. Its able advocacy of political principles was as striking as its judicial air of criticism, unprecedented in periodical literature. To appreciate its influence, we must remember, says Sydney Smith, that in those days a number of reforms, now familiar to us all, were still regarded as startling innovations. The Catholics were not emancipated, nor the game-laws softened, nor the Court of Chancery reformed, nor the slave-trade abolished. Cruel punishment still disgraced the criminal code, libel was put down with vindictive severity, prisoners were not allowed counsel in capital cases, and many other grievances now wholly or partially redressed were still flourishing in full force.

Were they put down solely by the *Edinburgh Review*? That, of course, would not be alleged by its most ardent admirers; though Sydney Smith certainly holds that the attacks of the *Edinburgh* were amongst the most efficient causes of the many victories which followed. I am not concerned to dispute the statement; nor in fact do I doubt that it contains much truth. But if we look at the *Review* simply as literary critics and examine its volumes expecting to be edified by such critical vigour and such a plentiful outpouring of righteous indignation in burning language as might correspond to this picture of a great organ of liberal opinion, we shall, I fear, be cruelly disappointed. Let us speak the plain truth at once. Every one who turns from the periodical literature of the present day to the original *Edinburgh Review*, will be amazed at its inferiority. It is generally dull and, when not dull, flimsy. The vigour has departed; the fire is extinct. To some extent, of course, this is inevitable. Even the magnificent eloquence of Burke has lost some of its early gloss. We can read, comparatively unmoved, passages that would have once carried us off our legs in the exuberant torrent of passionate invective. But, making all possible allowance for the fading of all things human, I think that every reader who is frank will admit his disappointment. Here and there, of course, are amusing passages; Sydney Smith's humour or some of Jeffrey's slashing and swaggering retains a few sparks of fire. The pertness and petulance of the youthful critics is amusing, though hardly in the way intended by themselves. But, as a rule, one may most easily characterize the contents by saying that few of the articles would have a chance of acceptance by the editor of a first-rate periodical to-day; and that the majority belong to an inferior variety of what is now called

"padding"—mere perfunctory bits of work, obviously manufactured by the critic out of the book before him.

The great political importance of the *Edinburgh Review* belongs to a later period. When the Whigs began to revive after the long reign of Tory principles, and such questions as Roman Catholic Emancipation and Parliamentary Reform were seriously coming to the front, the *Review* grew to be a most effective organ of the rising party. Even in earlier years, it was doubtless a matter of real moment that the ablest periodical of the day should manifest sympathies with the cause then so profoundly depressed. But in those years there is nothing of that vehement and unsparing advocacy of Whig principles which we might expect from a band of youthful enthusiasts. So far indeed was the *Review* from unhesitating partisanship that the sound Tory Scott contributed to its pages for some years; and so late as the end of 1807 invited Southey, a still more unsparing Tory, as became a "renegade" or a "convert," to enlist under Jeffrey. Southey, it is true, was prevented from joining by scruples shared by his correspondent, but it was not for another year that the breach became irreparable. The final offence was given by the "famous article upon Cevallos," which appeared in October 1808. Even at that period Scott understood some remarks of Jeffrey's as an offer to suppress the partisan tendencies of his *Review*. Jeffrey repudiated this interpretation; but the statement is enough to show that, for six years after its birth, the *Review* had not been conducted in such a way as to pledge itself beyond all redemption in the eyes of staunch Tories.*

The Cevallos article, the work in uncertain proportions of Brougham and Jeffrey, was undoubtedly calculated to give offence. It contained an eloquent expression of foreboding as to the chances of the war in Spain. The Whigs, whose policy had been opposed to the war, naturally prophesied its ill success, and, until this period, facts had certainly not confuted their auguries. It was equally natural that their opponents should be scandalised by their apparent want of patriotism. Scott's

* Scott's letter, stating that this overture had been made by Jeffrey under terror of the *Quarterly* was first published in Lockhart's *Life of Scott*. Jeffrey denied that he could ever have made the offer, both because his contributors were too independent and because he had always considered politics to be (as he remembered to have told Scott) the "right leg" of the *Review*. Undoubtedly, though Scott's letter was written at the time and Jeffrey's contradiction many years afterwards, it seems that Scott must have exaggerated. And yet in Horner's *Memoirs*, we find a letter from Jeffrey which goes far to show that there was more than might be supposed to confirm Scott's statement. Jeffrey begs for Horner's assistance in the "day of need," caused by the Cevallos article and the threatened *Quarterly*. He tells Horner that he may write upon any subject he pleases—"only no party politics, and nothing but exemplary moderation and impartiality on all politics. I have allowed too much mischief to be done from my mere indifference and love of sport; but it would be inexcusable to spoil the powerful instrument we have got hold of for the sake of teasing and playing tricks."—Horner's *Memoirs*, i. 439. It was on the occasion of the Cevallos article that the Earl of Buchan solemnly kicked the *Review* from his study into the street—a performance which he supposed would be fatal to its circulation.

indignation was characteristic. The *Edinburgh Review*, he says, "tells you coolly, 'We foresee a revolution in this country as well as Mr. Cobbett;' and, to say the truth, by degrading the person of the sovereign, exalting the power of the French armies and the wisdom of their counsels, holding forth that peace (which they allow can only be purchased by the humiliating prostration of our honour) is indispensable to the very existence of this country, I think that for these two years past, they have done their utmost to hasten the fulfilment of their own prophecy." Yet, he adds, 9,000 copies are printed quarterly, "no genteel family can pretend to be without it," and it contains the only valuable literary criticism of the day. The antidote was to be supplied by the foundation of the *Quarterly*. The Cevallos article, as Brougham says,* "first made the Reviewers conspicuous as Liberals."

Jeffrey and his friends were in fact in the very difficult position of all middle parties during a period of intense national and patriotic excitement. If they attacked Perceval or Canning or Castlereagh in one direction, they were equally opposed to the rough and ready democracy of Cobbett or Burdett, and to the more philosophical radicalism of men like Godwin or Bentham. They were generally too young to have been infected by the original Whig sympathy for the French Revolution, or embittered by the reaction. They condemned the principles of '89 as decidedly if not as heartily as the Tories. The difference, as Sydney Smith said to his imaginary Tory Abraham Plymley, is "in the means, not in the end. We both love the Constitution, respect the King, and abhor the French." Only, as the difference about the means was diametrical, Tories naturally held them to be playing into the hands of destructives, though more out of cowardice than malignity. In such a position it is not surprising if the reviewers generally spoke in apologetic terms and with bated breath. They could protest against the dominant policy as rash and bigoted, but could not put forwards conflicting principles without guarding themselves against the imputation of favouring the common enemy. The Puritans of Radicalism set down this vacillation to a total want of fixed principle, if not to baser motives. The first volume of the *Westminster Review* (1824) contains a characteristic assault upon the "see-saw" system of the *Edinburgh* by the two Mills. The *Edinburgh* is sternly condemned for its truckling to the aristocracy, its cowardice, political immorality, and (of all things!) its sentimentalism. In after years J. S. Mill contributed to its pages himself; but the opinion of his fervid youth was that of the whole Bentham school.† It is plain, however, that the *Review*, even when it had succeeded, did not absorb the activities of its contributors so exclusively as is sometimes suggested. They rapidly dispersed to enter upon different careers.

* See the privately printed correspondence of Mr. Macvey Napier, a remarkably interesting book, to which I venture to refer, as it has already formed the subject of some public notices.

† See Mill's *Autobiography*, p. 92, for an interesting account of these articles.

Even before the first number appeared, Jeffrey complains that almost all his friends are about to emigrate to London; and the prediction was soon verified. Sydney Smith left to begin his career as a clergyman in London; Horner and Brougham almost immediately took to the English Bar, with a view to pushing into public life; Allen joined Lord Holland; Charles Bell set up in a London practice; two other promising contributors took offence, and deserted the *Review* in its infancy; and Jeffrey was left almost alone, though still a centre of attraction to the scattered group. He himself only undertook the editorship, on the understanding that he might renounce it as soon as he could do without it; and always guarded himself most carefully against any appearance of deserting a legal for a literary career. Although the Edinburgh *cénacle* was not dissolved, its bonds were greatly loosened; the chief contributors were in no sense men who looked upon literature as a principal occupation; and Jeffrey, as much as Brougham and Horner, would have resented, as a mischievous imputation, the suggestion that his chief energies were devoted to the *Review*. In some sense this might be an advantage. An article upon politics or philosophy is, of course, better done by a professed statesman and thinker than by a literary hack; but, on the other hand, a man who turns aside from politics or philosophy to do mere hackwork, does it worse than the professed man of letters. Work, taken up at odd hours to satisfy editorial importunity or add a few pounds to a narrow income, is apt to show the characteristic defects of all amateur performances. A very large part of the early numbers is amateurish in this objectionable sense. It is mere hand-to-mouth information, and is written, so to speak, with the left hand. A clever man has turned over the last new book of travels or poetry, or made a sudden incursion into foreign literature or into some passage of history entirely fresh to him, and has given his first impressions with an audacity which almost disarms one by its extraordinary *naïveté*. The standard of such disquisitions was then so low that writing which would now be impossible passed muster without an objection. When, in later years, Macaulay discussed Hampden or Chatham, the book which he ostensibly reviewed was a mere pretext for producing the rich stores of a mind trained by years of previous historical study. Jeffrey wrote about Mrs. Hutchinson's *Memoirs* and Pepys's *Diary* as though the books had for the first time revealed to him the existence of Puritans or of courtiers under the Restoration. The author of an article upon German metaphysics at the present day would think it necessary to show that if he had not the portentous learning which Sir William Hamilton embodied in his *Edinburgh* articles, he had at least read the book under review, and knew something of the language. The author of a contemptuous review of Kant, in an early number of the *Edinburgh*, makes it even ostentatiously evident that he has never read a line of the original, and that his whole knowledge is derived from what (by his own account) is a very rambling and inadequate French essay. The young gentlemen who

wrote in those days have a jaunty mode of pronouncing upon all conceivable topics without even affecting to have studied the subject, which is amusing in its way, and which fully explains the flimsy nature of their performance.

The authors, in fact, regarded these essays, at the time, as purely ephemeral. The success of the *Review* suggested republication long afterwards. The first collection of articles was, I presume, Sydney Smith's, in 1839; Jeffrey's and Macaulay's followed in 1843; and at that time even Macaulay thought it necessary to explain that the republication was forced upon him by the Americans. The plan of passing even the most serious books through the pages of a periodical has become so common that such modesty would now imply the emptiest affectation. The collections of Jeffrey and Sydney Smith will give a sufficient impression of the earlier numbers of the *Review*. The only contributors of equal reputation were Horner and Brougham. Horner, so far as one can judge, was a typical representative of those solid, indomitable Scotchmen whom one knows not whether to respect for their energy or to dread as the most intolerable of bores. He plodded through legal, metaphysical, scientific, and literary studies like an elephant forcing his way through a jungle; and laboured as resolutely and systematically to acquire graces of style as to master the intricacies of the "dismal science." At an early age, and with no advantages of position, he had gained extraordinary authority in Parliament. Sydney Smith said of him that he had the Ten Commandments written on his face, and looked so virtuous that he might commit any crime with impunity. His death probably deprived us of a most exemplary statesman and first-rate Chancellor of the Exchequer, but it can hardly have been a great loss to literature.* His contributions gave some solid economical speculation to the *Review*, but were neither numerous nor lively. Brougham's amazing vitality wasted itself in a different way. His multifarious energy, from early boyhood to the borders of old age, would be almost incredible, if we had not the good fortune to be contemporaries of Mr. Gladstone. His share in the opening numbers

* Passages from Horner's journals, given in his *Memoirs*, are quaint illustrations of the frame of mind generally inculcated in manuals for the use of virtuous young men. At the age of twenty-eight, he resolves one day to meditate upon various topics, distributed under nine heads, including the society to be formed in the metropolis; the characters to be studied; the scale of intimacies; the style of conversation; the use of other men's minds in self-education; the regulation of ambition, of political sentiments, connections and conduct; the importance of "steadily systematising all plans and aims of life, and so providing against contingencies as to put happiness at least out of the reach of accident," and the cultivation of moral feelings by "dignified sentiments and pleasing associations" derived from poets, moralists, or actual life. Sydney Smith, in a very lively portrait, says that Horner was the best, kindest, simplest, and most incorruptible of mankind; but intimates sufficiently that his impenetrability to the facetious was something almost unexampled. A jest upon an important subject was, it seems, the only affliction which his strength of principle would not enable him to bear with patience.

of the *Review* is another of the points upon which there is an odd conflict of testimony.* But from a very early period he was the most voluminous and, at times, the most valuable of contributors. It has been said that he once wrote a whole number, including articles upon lithotomy and Chinese music. It is more authentic that he contributed six articles to one number, at the very crisis of his political career, and at the same period he boasts of having written a fifth of the whole *Review* to that time. He would sit down in a morning and write off twenty pages at a single effort. Jeffrey compares his own editorial authority to that of a feudal monarch over some independent barons. When Jeffrey gave up the *Review*, this "baron" aspired to something more like domination than independence. He made the unfortunate editor's life a burden to him. He wrote voluminous letters, objurgating, entreating, boasting of past services, denouncing rival contributors, declaring that a regard for the views of any other man was base subservience to a renegade Ministry, or foolish attention to the hints of understrappers, threatening, if he was neglected, to set up a rival review, and generally hectoring, bullying, and declaiming in a manner which gives one the highest opinion of the diplomatic skill of the editor, who managed, without truckling, to avoid a breach with his tremendous contributor. Brougham indeed was not quite blind to the fact that the *Review* was as useful to him as he could be to the *Review*, and was therefore more amenable than might have been expected, in the last resort. But he was in every relation one of those men who are nearly as much hated and dreaded by their colleagues as by the adversary—a kind of irrepressible rocket, only too easy to discharge, but whose course defied prediction.

It is, however, admitted by every one that the literary results of this portentous activity were essentially ephemeral. His writings are hopelessly commonplace in substance, and slipshod in style. His garden offers a bushel of potatoes instead of a single peach. Much of Brougham's work was up to the level necessary to give effect to the manifesto of an active politician. It was a fair exposition of the arguments common at the time; but it has nowhere that stamp of originality in thought or brilliance in expression which could confer upon it a permanent vitality.

Jeffrey and Sydney Smith deserve more respectful treatment. Macaulay speaks of his first edition with respectful enthusiasm. He says of the collected contributions that the "variety and fertility of Jeffrey's mind" seem more extraordinary than ever. Scarcely could any three

* It would appear, from one of Jeffrey's statements, that Brougham selfishly hung back till after the third number of the *Review*, and its "assured success" (Horner's *Memoirs*, i. p. 186, and Macvey Napier's *Correspondence*, p. 422); from another, that Brougham, though anxious to contribute, was excluded by Sydney Smith, from prudential motives. On the other hand, Brougham in his autobiography claims (by name) seven articles in the first number, five in the second, eight in the third, and five in the fourth; in five of which he had a collaborator. His hesitation, he says, ended before the appearance of the first number, and was due to doubts as to Jeffrey's being allowed sufficient power.

men have produced such "diversified excellence." "When I compare him with Sydney and myself, I feel, with humility perfectly sincere, that his range is immeasurably wider than ours. And this is only as a writer. But he is not only a writer, he has been a great advocate, and he is a great judge. Take him all in all, I think him more nearly an immortal genius than any man of our time; certainly far more nearly than Brougham, much as Brougham affects the character." Macaulay hated Brougham, and was, perhaps, a little unjust to him. But what are we to say of the writings upon which this panegyric is pronounced?

Jeffrey's collected articles include about eighty out of two hundred reviews, nearly all contributed to the *Edinburgh* within its first period of twenty-five years. They fill four volumes, and are distributed under the seven heads—general literature, history, poetry, metaphysics, fiction, politics, and miscellaneous. Certainly there is versatility enough implied in such a list, and we may be sure that he has ample opportunity for displaying whatever may be in him. It is, however, easy to dismiss some of these divisions. Jeffrey knew history as an English gentleman of average cultivation knew it; that is to say, not enough to justify him in writing about it. He knew as much of metaphysics as a clever lad was likely to pick up at Edinburgh during the reign of Dugald Stewart; his essays in that kind, though they show some aptitude and abundant confidence, do not now deserve serious attention. His chief speculative performance was an essay upon beauty contributed to the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, of which his biographer says quaintly that it is "as sound as the subject admits of." It is crude and meagre in substance. The principal conclusion is the rather unsatisfactory one for a professional critic that there are no particular rules about beauty, and consequently that one taste is about as good as another. Nobody, however, could be less inclined to apply this over liberal theory to questions of literary taste. There, he evidently holds, there is most decidedly a right and wrong, and everybody is very plainly in the wrong who differs from himself.

Jeffrey's chief fame—or, should we say, notoriety?—was gained, and his merit should be tested by his success, in this department. The greatest triumph that a literary critic can win is the early recognition of genius not yet appreciated by his contemporaries. The next test of his merit is his capacity for pronouncing sound judgment upon controversies which are fully before the public; and, finally, no inconsiderable merit must be allowed to any critic who has a vigorous taste of his own—not hopelessly eccentric or silly—and expresses it with true literary force. If not a judge, he may in that case be a useful advocate.

What can we say for Jeffrey upon this understanding? Did he ever encourage a rising genius? The sole approach to such a success is an appreciative notice of Keats, which would be the more satisfactory if poor Keats had not been previously assailed by the opposition journal. The other judgments are for the most part pronounced upon men already celebrated; and the single phrase which has survived is the celebrated

"This will never do," directed against Wordsworth's *Excursion*. Every critic is liable to blunder; but Jeffrey's blundering is amazingly systematic and comprehensive. In the last of his poetical critiques (October 1829) he sums up his critical experience. He doubts whether Mrs. Hemans, whom he is reviewing at the time, will be immortal. "The tuneful quartos of Southey," he says, "are already little better than lumber; and the rich melodies of Keats and Shelley, and the fantastical emphasis of Wordsworth, and the plebeian pathos of Crabbe, are melting fast from the field of vision. The novels of Scott have put out his poetry. Even the splendid strains of Moore are fading into distance and dimness, except where they have been married to immortal music; and the blazing star of Byron himself is receding from its place of pride." Who survive this general decay? Not Coleridge, who is not even mentioned; nor is Mrs. Hemans secure. The two who show least marks of decay are—of all people in the world—Rogers and Campbell! It is only to be added that this summary was republished in 1843, by which time the true proportions of the great reputations of the period were becoming more obvious to an ordinary observer. It seems almost incredible now that any sane critic should pick out Rogers and Campbell as the sole enduring relics from the age of Wordsworth, Shelley, Keats, Coleridge, and Byron.

Doubtless a critic should rather draw the moral of his own fallibility than of his superiority to Jeffrey. Criticism is a still more perishing commodity than poetry. Jeffrey was a man of unusual intelligence and quickness of feeling; and a follower in his steps should think twice before he ventures to cast the first stone. If all critics who have grossly blundered are therefore to be pronounced utterly incompetent, we should, I fear, have to condemn nearly every one who has taken up the profession. Not only Dennis and Rymer, but Dryden, Pope, Addison, Johnson, Gray, Wordsworth, Byron, and even Coleridge, down to the last new critic in the latest and most fashionable journals, would have to be censured. Still there are blunders and blunders; and some of Jeffrey's sins in that kind are such as it is not very easy to forgive. If he attacked great men, it has been said in his defence, he attacked those parts of their writings which were really objectionable. And, of course, nobody will deny that (for example) Wordsworth's wilful and ostentatious inversion of accepted rules presented a very tempting mark to the critic. But—to say nothing of Jeffrey's failure to discharge adequately the correlative duty of generous praise—it must be admitted that his ridicule seems to strike pretty much at random. He picks out Southey, certainly the least eminent of the so-called school of Wordsworth, Coleridge, and Lamb, as the one writer of the set whose poetry deserves serious consideration; and, besides attacking Wordsworth's faults, his occasional flatness and childishness, selects some of his finest poems (*e.g.* the *Ode on the Intimations of Immortality*) as flagrant specimens of the hopelessly absurd.

The *White Doe of Rylstone* may not be Wordsworth's best work ; but a man who begins a review of it by proclaiming it to be "the very worst poem ever imprinted in a quarto volume," who follows up this remark by unmixed and indiscriminating abuse, and who publishes the review twenty-eight years later as expressing his mature convictions, is certainly proclaiming his own gross incompetence. Or, again, Jeffrey writes about *Wilhelm Meister* (in 1824), knowing its high reputation in Germany, and finds in it nothing but a text for a dissertation upon the amazing eccentricity of national taste which can admire "sheer nonsense," and at length proclaims himself tired of extracting "so much trash." There is a kind of indecency, a wanton disregard of the general consensus of opinion in such treatment of a contemporary classic (then just translated by Mr. Carlyle, and so brought within Jeffrey's sphere) which one would hope to be now impossible. It is true that Jeffrey relents a little at the end, admits that Goethe has "great talent," and would like to withdraw some of his censure. Whilst, therefore, he regards it as an instance of that diversity of national taste which makes a writer idolized in one country who would not be tolerated in another, he would hold it out rather as an object of wonder than contempt. Though the greater part "would not be endured, and, indeed, could not have been written in England," there are many passages of which any country might naturally be proud. Truly this is an illustration of Jeffrey's fundamental principle that taste has no laws, and is a matter of accidental caprice.

It may be said that better critics have erred with equal recklessness. De Quincey, who could be an admirable critic where his indolent prejudices were not concerned, is even more dead to the merits of Goethe. Byron's critical remarks are generally worth reading, in spite of his wilful eccentricity ; and he spoke of Wordsworth and Southey still more brutally than Jeffrey, and admired Rogers as unreasonably. In such cases we may admit the principle already suggested, that even the most reckless criticism has a kind of value when it implies a genuine (even though a mistaken) taste. So long as a man says sincerely what he thinks, he tells us something worth knowing.

Unluckily this is just where Jeffrey is apt to fail ; though he affects to be a dictator, he is really a follower of the fashion. He could put up with Rogers' flattest "correctness," Moore's most intolerable tinsel, and even Southey's most ponderous epic poetry, because admiration was respectable. He could endorse, though rather coldly, the general verdict in Scott's favour, only guarding his dignity by some not too judicious criticism ; preferring, for example, the sham romantic business of the *Lay* to the incomparable vigour of the rough moss-troopers

Who sought the beeves that made their broth,
In Scotland and in England both—

terribly undignified lines, as Jeffrey thinks. So far, though his judicial

swagger strikes us now as rather absurd, and we feel that he is passing sentence on bigger men than himself, he does fairly enough. But, unluckily, the *Edinburgh* wanted a butt. All lively critical journals, it would seem, resemble the old-fashioned squires who kept a badger ready to be baited whenever a little amusement was desirable. The rising school of Lake poets, with their austere professions and real weaknesses, was just the game to show a little sport; and, accordingly, poor Jeffrey blundered into grievous misapprehensions, and has survived chiefly by his worst errors. The simple fact is, that he accepted whatever seemed to a hasty observer to be the safest opinion, that which was current in the most orthodox critical circles, and expressed it with rather more point than his neighbours. But his criticism implies no serious thought or any deeper sentiment than pleasure at having found a good laughing-stock. The most unmistakable bit of genuine expression of his own feelings in Jeffrey's writings is, I think, to be found in his letters to Dickens. "Oh! my dear, dear Dickens!" he exclaims, "what a No. 5" (of *Dombey and Son*) "you have now given us. I have so cried and sobbed over it last night and again this morning, and felt my heart purified by those tears, and blessed and loved you for making me shed them; and I never can bless and love you enough. Since that divine Nelly was found dead on her humble couch, beneath the snow and ivy, there has been nothing like the actual dying of that sweet Paul in the summer sunshine of that lofty room." The emotion is a little senile, and most of us think it misplaced; but at least it is genuine. The earlier thunders of the *Edinburgh Review* have lost their terrors, because they are in fact mere echoes of commonplace opinion. They are often clever enough and have all the air of judicial authority, but we feel that they are empty shams, concealing no solid core of strong personal feeling even of the perverse variety. The critic has been asking himself, not "What do I feel?" but "What is the correct remark to make?"

Jeffrey's political writing suggests, I think, in some respects a higher estimate of his merits. He has not, it is true, very strong convictions, but his sentiments are liberal in the better sense of the word, and he has a more philosophical tone than is usual with English publicists. He appreciates the truths, now become commonplace, that the political constitution of the country should be developed so as to give free play for the underlying social forces without breaking abruptly with the old traditions. He combats with dignity the narrow prejudices which led to a policy of rigid repression, and which, in his opinion, could only lead to revolution. But the effect of his principles is not a little marred by a certain timidity both of character and intellect. Hopefulness should be the mark of an ardent reformer, and Jeffrey seems to be always decided by his fears. His favourite topic is the advantage of a strong middle party, for he is terribly afraid of a collision between the two extremes; he can only look forwards to despotism if the Tories triumph, and a sweeping revolution if they are beaten. Meanwhile, for many

years he thinks it most probable that both parties will be swallowed up by the common enemy. Never was there such a determined croaker. In 1808 he suspects that Bonaparte will be in Dublin in about fifteen months, when he, if he survives, will try to go to America. In 1811 he expects Bonaparte to be in Ireland in eighteen months, and asks how England can then be kept, and whether it would be worth keeping? France is certain to conquer the continent, and our interference will only "exasperate and accelerate." Bonaparte's invasion of Russia in 1813 made him still more gloomy. He rejoiced at the French defeat as one delivered from a great terror, but the return of the Emperor dejects him again. All he can say of the war (just before Waterloo) is that he is "mortally afraid of it," and that he hates Bonaparte "because he makes me more afraid than anybody else." In 1819 he anticipates "tragical scenes" and a sanguinary revolution; in 1821 he thinks as ill as ever "of the state and prospects of the country," though with less alarm of speedy mischief; and in 1822 he looks forward to revolutionary wars all over the continent, from which we may possibly escape by reason of our "miserable poverty;" whilst it is probable that our old tyrannies and corruptions will last for some 4,000 or 5,000 years longer.

A stalwart politician, Whig or Tory, is rarely developed out of a Mr. Much-Afraid or a Mr. Despondency; they are too closely related to Mr. Facing-Both-Ways. Jeffrey thinks it generally a duty to conceal his fears and affect a confidence which he does not feel; but perhaps the best piece of writing in his essays is that in which he for once gives full expression to his pessimist sentiment. It occurs in a review of a book in which Madame de Staël maintains the doctrine of human perfectibility. Jeffrey explains his more despondent view in a really eloquent passage. He thinks that the increase of educated intelligence will not diminish the permanent causes of human misery. War will be as common as ever, wealth will be used with at least equal selfishness, luxury and dissipation will increase, enthusiasm diminish, intellectual originality will become rarer, the division of labour will make men's lives pettier and more mechanical, and pauperism grow with the development of manufactures. When republishing his essays Jeffrey expresses his continued adherence to these views, and they are more interesting than most of his work, because they have at least the merits of originality and sincerity. Still, one cannot help observing that if the *Edinburgh Review* was an efficient organ of progress, it was not from any ardent faith in progress entertained by its chief conductor.

It is a relief to turn from Jeffrey to Sydney Smith. The highest epithet applicable to Jeffrey is clever, to which we may prefix some modest intensive. He is a brilliant, versatile, and at bottom liberal and kindly man of the world; but he never gets fairly beyond the border-line which irrevocably separates lively talent from original power. There are dozens of writers who could turn out work on the same pattern and about equally good. Smith, on the other hand, stamps all his work

with his peculiar characteristics. It is original and unmistakeable; and in a certain department—not, of course, a very high one—he has almost unique merits. I do not think that the *Plymley Letters* can be surpassed by anything in the language as specimens of the terse, effective treatment of a great subject in language suitable for popular readers. Of course they have no pretence to the keen polish of Junius, or the weight of thought of Burke, or the rhetorical splendours of Milton; but their humour, freshness, and spirit are inimitable. The *Drapier Letters*, to which they have often been compared, were more effective at the moment; but no fair critic can deny, I think, that Sydney Smith's performance is now incomparably more interesting than Swift's.

The comparison between the dean and the canon is an obvious one, and has often been made. There is a likeness in the external history of the two clergymen who both sought for preferment through politics, and were both, even by friends, felt to have sinned against professional proprieties, and were put off with scanty rewards in consequence. Both, too, were masters of a vigorous style, and original humourists. But the likeness does not go very deep. Swift had the most powerful intellect and the strongest passion as undeniably as Smith had the sweetest nature. The admirable good humour with which Smith accepted his position and devoted himself to honest work in an obscure country parish is the strongest contrast with Swift's misanthropical seclusion; and nothing can be less like than Smith's admirable domestic history and the mysterious love affairs with Stella and Vanessa. Smith's character reminds us more closely of Fuller, whose peculiar humour is much of the same stamp; and who, falling upon hard times, and therefore tinged by a more melancholy sentiment, yet showed the same unconquerable cheerfulness and intellectual vivacity.

Most of Sydney Smith's *Edinburgh* articles are of a very slight texture, though the reader is rewarded by an occasional turn of characteristic quaintness. The criticism is of the most simple-minded kind; but here and there crops up a comment which is irresistibly comic. Here, for example, is a quaint passage from a review of Waterton's *Wanderings*:—

How astonishing are the freaks and fancies of nature! To what purpose, we say, is a bird placed in the woods of Cayenne, with a bill a yard long, making a noise like a puppy-dog, and laying eggs in hollow trees? To be sure the toucan might retort, To what purpose were gentlemen in Bond Street created? To what purpose were certain members of parliament created, pestering the House of Commons with their ignorance and folly, and impeding the business of the country? There is no end of such questions. So we will not enter into the metaphysics of the toucan.

Smith's humour is most aptly used to give point to the vigorous logic of a thoroughly healthy nature, contemptuous of all nonsense, full of shrewd common sense, and righteously indignant in the presence of all injustice and outworn abuse. It would be difficult to find anywhere a

more brilliant assault upon the prejudices which defend established grievances than the inimitable "Noodle's Oration," into which Smith has compressed the pith of Bentham's *Book of Fallacies*. There is a certain resemblance between the logic of Smith and Macaulay, both of whom, it must be admitted, are rather given to proving commonplaces and inclined to remain on the surface of things. Smith, like Macaulay, fully understands the advantage of putting the concrete for the abstract, and hammering obvious truths into men's heads by dint of homely explanation. Smith's memory does not supply so vast a store of parallels as that upon which Macaulay could draw so freely; but his humorous illustrations are more amusing and effective. There could not be a happier way of putting the argument for what may be called the lottery system of endowments than the picture of the respectable baker driving past Northumberland House to St. Paul's Churchyard and speculating on the chance of elevating his "little muffin-faced son" to a place among the Percies or the highest seat in the Cathedral. Macaulay would have enforced his reasoning by a catalogue of successful ecclesiastics. The folly of alienating Catholic sympathies, during our great struggle, by maintaining the old disabilities, is brought out with equal skill by the apologue in the *Plymley Letters* of the orthodox captain of a frigate in a dangerous action, securing twenty or thirty of his crew, who happened to be Papists, under a Protestant guard, reminding his sailors in a bitter harangue that they are of different religions; exhorting the Episcopal gunner to distrust the Presbyterian quartermaster; rushing through blood and brains to examine his men in the Thirty-Nine Articles, and forbidding any one to sponge or ram who has not taken the sacrament according to the rites of the Church of England. It is quite another question whether Smith really penetrates to the bottom of the question; but the only fault to be found with his statement of the case, as he saw it, is that it makes it rather too clear. The arguments are never all on one side in any political question, and the writer who sees absolutely no difficulty suggests to a wary reader that he is ignoring something relevant. Still, this is hardly an objection to a popular advocate, and it is fair to add that Smith's logic is not more admirable than the hearty generosity of his sympathy with the oppressed Catholic. The appeal to cowardice is lost in the appeal to true philanthropic sentiment.

With all his merits, there is a less favourable side to Smith's advocacy. When he was condemned as being too worldly and facetious for a priest, it was easy to retort that humour is not of necessity irreligious. It might be added that in his writings it is strictly subservient to solid argument. In a London party he might throw the reins upon the neck of his fancy and go on playing with a ludicrous image till his audience felt the agony of laughter to be really painful. In his writings, he aims almost as straight at his mark as Swift, and is never diverted by the spirit of pure fun. The humour always illuminates well-strung logic. But the scandal was not quite groundless. When he

directs his powers against sheer obstruction and antiquated prejudice—against abuses in prisons or the game-laws or education—we can have no fault to find; nor is it fair to condemn a reviewer because in all these questions he is a follower rather than a leader. It is enough if he knows a good cause when he sees it, and does his best to back up reformers in the press, though hardly a working reformer, and certainly not an originator of reform. But it is less easy to excuse his want of sympathy for the reformers themselves.

If there is one thing which Sydney Smith dreads and dislikes, it is enthusiasm. Nobody would deny, at the present day, that the zeal which supplied the true leverage for some of the greatest social reforms of the time was to be found chiefly amongst the so-called Evangelicals and Methodists. For them, Smith has nothing but the heartiest aversion. He is always having a quiet jest at the religious sentiments of Perceval or Wilberforce, and his most prominent articles in the *Review* were a series of inexcusably bitter attacks upon the Methodists. He is thoroughly alarmed and disgusted by their progress. He thinks them likely to succeed, and says that, if they succeed, "happiness will be destroyed, reason degraded, and sound religion banished from the world:" and that a reign of fanaticism will be succeeded by "a long period of the grossest immorality, atheism, and debauchery." He is not sure that any remedy or considerable palliative is possible, but he suggests, as hopeful, the employment of ridicule, and applies it himself most unsparingly. When the Methodists try to convert the Hindoos, he attacks them furiously for endangering the empire. They naturally reply that a Christian is bound to propagate his belief. The answer, says Smith, is short: "It is not Christianity which is introduced (into India), but the debased nonsense and mummerly of the Methodists, which has little more to do with the Christian religion than it has to do with the religion of China." The missionaries, he says, are so foolish, "that the natives almost instinctively duck and pelt them," as, one cannot help remembering, other missionaries have been ducked and pelted. He pronounces the enterprise to be hopeless and cruel, and clenches his argument by a statement which sounds strangely enough in the mouth of a sincere Christian:—

Let us ask (he says) if the Bible is universally diffused in Hindostan, what must be the astonishment of the natives to find that we are forbidden to rob, murder, and steal—we who, in fifty years, have, extended our empire from a few acres about Madras over the whole peninsula and sixty millions of people, and exemplified in our public conduct every crime of which human nature is capable? What matchless impudence to follow up such practice with such precepts! If we have common prudence, let us keep the gospel at home, and tell them that Machiavel is our prophet and the god of the Manichæans our god.

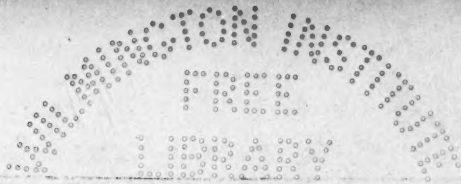
We are to make our practice consistent by giving up our virtues instead of our vices. Of course, Smith ends his article by a phrase about "the slow, solid, and temperate introduction of Christianity;" but the

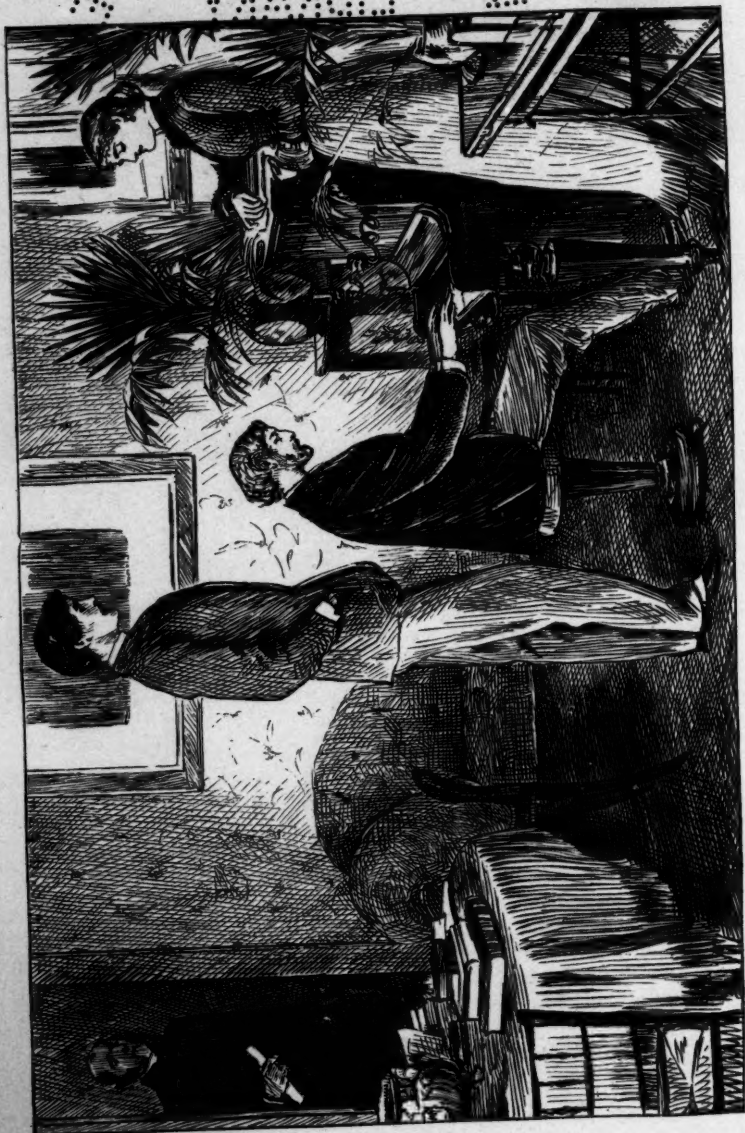
Methodists might well feel that the "matchless impudence" was not all on their side, and that this Christian priest, had he lived some centuries earlier, would have sympathised a good deal more with Gallio than with St. Paul.

It is a question which I need not here discuss how far Smith could be justified in his ridicule of men who, with all their undeniable absurdity, were at least zealous believers in the creed which he—as is quite manifest—held in all sincerity. But one remark is obvious; the Edinburgh reviewers justify, to a certain point, the claim put forward by Sydney Smith; they condemned many crying abuses, and condemned them heartily. They condemned them, as thoroughly sensible men of the world, animated partly by a really generous sentiment, partly by a tacit scepticism as to the value of the protected interests, and above all by the strong conviction that it was quite essential for the middle party, that is, for the bulk of the respectable well-bred classes to throw overboard gross abuses which afforded so many points of attack to thoroughgoing radicals. On the other hand, they were quite indifferent or openly hostile to most of the new forces which stirred men's minds. They patronised political economy because Malthus began by opposing the revolutionary dreams of Godwin and his like. But every one of the great impulses of the time was treated by them in an antagonistic spirit. They savagely ridiculed Coleridge, the great seminal mind of one philosophical school; they fiercely attacked Bentham and James Mill, the great leaders of the antagonist school; they were equally opposed to the Evangelicals who revered Wilberforce, and, in later times, to the religious party, of which Dr. Newman was the great ornament; in poetry they clung, as long as they could, to the safe old principles represented by Crabbe and Rogers; they covered Wordsworth and Coleridge with almost unmixed ridicule, ignored Shelley, and were only tender to Byron and Scott, because Scott and Byron were fashionable idols. The truth is, that it is a mistake to suppose that the eighteenth century ended with the year 1800. It lasted in the upper currents of opinion till at least 1832. Sydney Smith's theology is that of Paley and the common-sense divines of the previous period. Jeffrey's politics were but slightly in advance of the true old Whigs, who still worshipped according to the tradition of their fathers in Holland House. The ideal of the party was to bring the practice of the country up to the theory whose main outlines had been accepted in the Revolution of 1688; and they studiously shut their eyes to any newer intellectual and social movements.

I do not say this by way of simple condemnation; for we have daily more reason to acknowledge the immense value of calm, clear, common sense, which sees the absurd side of even the best impulses. But it is necessary to bear the fact in mind when estimating such claims as those put forward by Sydney Smith. The truth seems to be that the *Edinburgh Review* enormously raised the tone of periodical literature at the time, by opening an arena for perfectly independent discussion.

Its great merit, at starting, was that it was no mere publisher's organ, like its rivals, and that it paid contributors well enough to attract the most rising talent of the day. As the *Review* progressed, its capacities became more generally understood, and its writers, as they rose to eminence and attracted new allies, put more genuine work into articles certain to obtain a wide circulation and to come with great authority. This implies a long step towards the development of the present system whose merits and defects would deserve a full discussion—the system, according to which much of the most solid and original work of the time first appears in periodicals. The tone of periodicals has been enormously raised, but the effect upon general literature may be more questionable. But the *Edinburgh* was not in its early years a journal with a mission, or the organ of an enthusiastic sect. Rather it was the instrument used by a number of very clever young men to put forward the ideas current in the more liberal section of the upper classes, with much occasional vigour and a large infusion of common sense, but also with abundant flippancy and superficiality, and, in a literary sense, without that solidity of workmanship which is essential for enduring vitality.



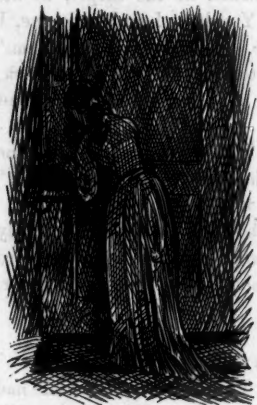


"DRINK TO ME ONLY WITH THINE EYES."

"For Percival."

CHAPTER XXXIX.

SHORT RECKONINGS MAKE LONG FRIENDS.



IT was the 1st of March, and a wild wind was hurrying shreds of white cloud across the blue. Percival had taken his breakfast in snatches, performing on his bell meanwhile. Emma had not brought his boots, and would not so much as come to be told that he wanted them. At last, despairing, he went out on the landing and shouted his request to her, as she shuffled on some errand below. Turning to go back, he met Miss Lisle, who had just come down the stairs behind him.

They stood for a moment exchanging trivial remarks. To them came a stout, fresh-coloured, peculiarly innocent-looking old man, who went by with a beaming

smile, and a slight bow.

"That's Mr. Fordham," said Judith; "I don't think I ever saw him so close before."

"No; one hardly meets him from one week's end to another. He is unusually late this morning."

"He *looks* a very quiet, steady—really one might take him for rather a nice old man."

Percival stared blankly at her, and then began to laugh. "Well, Miss Lisle, I never heard a reputation blighted so completely by a complimentary sentence before."

Judith blushed a little. "But he isn't very nice, is he?"

"I don't know about nice. I should say he was as steady and harmless an old fellow as ever lived. What *do* you mean?"

"Well—" Judith hesitated. "Of course one has no business to judge any one without really knowing. But his staying out so late at night——"

"So late at night!" Percival repeated.

"I suppose he has a latch key generally. But one or two nights I am sure Miss Bryant sat up to let him in. I heard them whispering,

at least I heard her. I don't think that girl could even whisper quietly."

"But there must be some mistake. Fordham comes in quite early, and very often he doesn't go out at all in the evening."

"He goes out later," said Judith.

"Indeed, no. I could time all his movements. His room is next mine, and the wall is not so thick as I could wish. He snores sometimes."

"But," she persisted, looking scared and white—yet what was Fordham to her?—"But I have heard him over and over again, Mr. Thorne, I can't be mistaken."

Percival was disconcerted, too. He looked at the carpet, at his slippered feet, at anything but her face. "You have heard some one, I suppose; I don't know who comes in late. Not poor old Fordham." He heard Emma on the stairs, and hurried to meet her. Coming back, with his boots in his hand, he found Judith standing exactly as he had left her.

"I'm sure I beg Mr. Fordham's pardon," she said with a smile. "One does make curious mistakes, certainly. That nice-looking old man!" And nodding farewell to young Thorne, she went away.

He did not see her again for two days, though he watched anxiously for her. Bertie came in and out, and was much as usual. On the third evening, as Percival was going upstairs, she called after him, "Mr. Thorne."

He turned eagerly.

"You lent Bertie some money a day or two since?"

Something in her voice or her look made Percival sure that Lisle had borrowed and spent it without her knowledge, and that it was a trouble to her. After all, what did it matter? He would sell his watch, and pay Mrs. Bryant. He could not deny Bertie's debt, since she had found it out, but he could make light of it.

So he nodded. "Yes, by the way, I believe I did. He hadn't his purse or something." This in a tone of airy indifference.

"Tell me how much it was, please, and I'll pay it back." Then he saw that her purse was open in her hand.

"Oh, it doesn't matter," he said; "don't pay me off in such a quick, business-like way, Miss Lisle. I'm not the milkman, nor yet the washing. Bertie will settle with me one of these days."

"Please tell me, Mr. Thorne. I mean to pay it. I must."

"Well, I'll ask him about it then."

"You know," with a look of reproach and pleading.

Percival could not deceive her, she looked so sorrowfully resolute. He met the glance of her grey eyes.

"Two pounds," he said, and was certain that she was relieved at the answer.

"Bertie wasn't sure it wasn't two pounds ten."

"On my honour, no. He asked me for a couple of sovereigns, and I took it literally."

"If you say so, I am sure. I didn't doubt you. I only told you that you might understand why I asked." She put the money, a sovereign and two halves, into his unwilling hand. Then he understood her relief, for looking down into the little sealskin purse, he saw that there was no more gold in it. The last ten shillings must have been counted out in silver, and he was not quite sure it would not have ended in a threepenny piece, and some halfpence.

"Now I am going to ask a favour," she said. "Don't lend Bertie any more, please. He has been used to spend just what he liked, and he doesn't think, poor boy. And it is only wasted. Don't let him have any more."

"But, Miss Lisle," said Percival, "if your brother asks me, do you mean that I am to say 'No'?"

"Please—if you would. He mustn't be extravagant, we can't afford it. He can't pay you back, and if I lost any of my work—Mrs. Barton's lessons, for instance—I couldn't either."

"*You work to pay me!*" exclaimed Percival aghast; "I won't hear of such a thing. Miss Lisle, you mustn't! It's between Bertie and myself, and I shouldn't be ruined if he didn't pay me till his ship comes home one of these days. Take it back, please, and he and I will arrange it."

She shook her head. "No! my brother's debts are mine."

"Ah!" said Percival, with a swift, eloquent glance. "Then let me be your creditor a little longer; I hardly know what it feels like, yet."

"Since when has *your* ship come home, Mr. Thorne, that you can afford to be so generous?"

The blood mounted to his forehead at her question, but he answered quickly:

"My ship has not come home. Perhaps if it had I should not dare to ask you to let me help you. I feel as if our poverty made us all nearer together."

"It is not every one who would say so in your place," Judith replied. "I *am* your debtor, for those words. But we Lisles have wronged you too much already; you shouldn't try to make the load heavier."

"Wronged me?" he faltered.

"Did you think I did not know? My father had your money and ruined you, deny it if you can! I suspected it, and lately I have been sure. Oh, if Bertie and I could pay you back! But meanwhile he shall not borrow from you, and waste your earnings on his silly whims. If you lend him any more you may try to hide it from me, but I shall find it out, and I will pay it, every farthing. I will find some way, if I have to sit up every night for a week, and work my fingers to the bone!"

"God forbid!" said Percival. "He shall have no more from me. But be generous, and promise me, that if you *should* want help, such as my poverty can give, you will forget old times, and come to me."

"No, I won't promise that. I will remember them, and come!" She caught his hand, pressed it one moment in her own, flung it from her, and escaped.

"Judith!" he called after her, but she was gone.

Percival went into his own room. The money had come just in time, for his landlady's weekly account was lying on the table. He looked at the three coins with lingering tenderness, and, after a moment's hesitation, he took one of them, and vowed that he would never part with it. Yet, in the midst of his ardent resolution, he smiled rather bitterly to think that it was not the sovereign, but one of the halves, he meant to keep for ever. Poverty had taught him many lessons, and among them, how to combine economy and sentiment. "If she had given me the ten shillings' worth of silver, I suppose I should have saved the threepenny bit!" he said to himself, as he locked his little remembrance in his desk.

A couple of days later, as he was walking home with Bertie, they passed three or four men who were sauntering idly along; and Thorne felt sure that his companion received, and returned, a silent glance of recognition. He glanced over his shoulder at them, and disliked their look exceedingly.

"Do you know who those fellows were we passed just now?" he said.

Bertie looked back. "One is the brother of a man in our choir."

"Hm! I wouldn't have one of them for my brother at any price," said Percival. The matter dropped, but he could not forget it. He fancied that there was a slight change in Bertie himself, that the boy's face was keener and haggard, and that there was an anxious expression in his eyes. But he owned frankly that he was not at all sure that he should have noticed anything if his suspicions had not been previously aroused.

"Come in this evening," said Bertie, when they went upstairs. He leant against the door of Percival's room, and as his friend hesitated he called to his sister: "Here, Judith! tell Thorne to come and have some tea with us; they've let his fire out, and his room is as warm and cheerful as a sepulchre."

"Do you think I order other people about as I do you?" she replied. "Will you come, Mr. Thorne? I can at any rate promise you a fire and a welcome."

When she met him she was quite calm, tranquil, and clear-eyed. Do the ripples of the summer sea recall that distant line, the supreme effort of wind and tide some stormy night? Percival would have thought that it had been all a dream, but for the little coin which that wave had flung

at his feet for a remembrance. And he had called after her "Judith!" The tide had ebbed, and he did not even think of her as other than Miss Lisle. Had she heard him that evening? He would almost have hoped not, but that twilight moment seemed so far away that it must be absurd to link it with his everyday life.

Apparently she and Bertie were on their usual footing. Did the young fellow know of that absurd mistake about old Fordham? Did Percival really detect a shade of dim apprehension on Judith Lisle's face, as if she hid an unspoken fear? As Bertie leant forward, and the lamp-light shone on his clearly-cut features, Percival was more than ever certain of the change in him. Could his sister fail to see it?

"Bertie," she said, when they had finished their tea, and were standing round the fire; "Bertie, I'm afraid you have lost one of your pupils."

He had his elbow on the chimney-piece, his hand hung loosely open, and his eyes were fixed upon the leaping flames. When Judith spoke he looked up inquiringly.

"Miss Nash—Emmeline Nash," said Judith.

Percival happened to be looking at the fire, too, and he suddenly saw Bertie's fingers drawn quickly up. But the young master spoke very composedly indeed: "Emmeline Nash—why? Has anything happened?"

"No! only Mr. Nash has given in at last, and says she may go home at Easter for good. She is older than any of the other pupils, Mr. Thorne; in fact, she is not treated as a pupil. But her father is——"

"An old fossil!" said Bertie.

"Well—interested in fossils, and that sort of thing, and a widower; so there has not been much of a home for her, and he always fancied she was better at school. But school can't last for ever——"

"Happiest time of one's life!" Bertie ejaculated.

"Oh! do you think so?" said Judith, doubtfully.

"Not at all! But I believe it is the right thing to say."

"Stupid boy! And as she will very soon be twenty, I really think she ought not to be kept there any longer."

"Of course Miss Nash is delighted," said Percival.

"Yes, but hardly as much so as I expected. One's castles in the air don't look quite the same when one is close to them. I am afraid her home life won't be very bright."

"Perhaps she will make it brighter," said Thorne. "What is she like? Is she pretty?"

"Yes," said Bertie.

Judith smiled. "One has to qualify all one's adjectives for her. She is nice-ish, pretty-ish; I doubt if she is as much as clever-ish."

"No need for her to be any more," Bertie remarked. "Didn't Miss Crawford say she would come in for a lot of money, some of her mother's, when she was one-and-twenty?"

"Yes—five or six hundred a year."

"That's why he has kept her at school, I suppose. Afraid she should take up with a curate, very likely."

"Mr. Nash is very rich too, and she is an only child," said Judith, ignoring Bertie's remark. "But I think it has been hard on Emmeline."

"Well, I'm sorry she is going," said Lisle, "*very* sorry."

"Is she such a promising pupil?" Thorne inquired.

"She's a nice girl," said Bertie, "but a promising pupil—O Lord!" He flew to the piano, played an air in a singularly wooden manner, and then dragged it languidly, yet laboriously, up and down the keys. "Variations, you perceive." After a little more of this treatment, the unfortunate melody grew very lame indeed, and finally died of exhaustion.

"That's Miss Emmeline Nash!" said Bertie, spinning round on the music-stool, and confronting Percival.

"It is very like Emmeline's style of playing," Judith owned.

"Of course it is. Let's have something else for a change." And turning back to the piano he began to sing. Then he called Judith to come and take her turn. She sang well, and Percival, by the fireside, noted the young fellow's evident pride in her performance, and admired the pair. (Anyone else might have admired the three, for Thorne's grave, foreign-looking face was just the fitting contrast to the Lisles' fair, clear features. The morbid depression of a couple of months earlier had passed, and left him far more like the Percival of Brackenhill. Poverty surrounded the friends and dulled their lives, but as yet it was only a burden, not a blight.)

"You sing," said Bertie, looking back. "I remember you were great at some of those old songs. I'll play for you—what shall it be?"

"I'm sure I hardly know," said Percival, coming forward.

"Let's have 'Shall I, wasting in despair?'" Lisle suggested. "It has been going in my head all this morning." He played a few notes.

"No, no!" the other exclaimed hurriedly. "Not that." Too well he remembered the tender devotion of more than a year before:

If she love me, this believe,
I will die ere she shall grieve.

Sissy and Brackenhill rose before him—the melancholy orchard walk, the little hands which lay in his on that November day. He felt a dull pain, yet what could he do, what could he have done? There was a terrible mistake somewhere, but he could not say where. If he had married Sissy, would it not have been there? He woke up suddenly—young Lisle was speaking, and Judith was saying, "Let Mr. Thorne choose."

"Oh, I don't mind," said Percival. "Shall it be 'Drink to me only with thine eyes?'"

He sang it well. His voice was strong and full, and the sweet old-fashioned courtesy of compliment suited him exactly. The last word had scarcely left his lips, when the door opened, and Emma showed in Mr. Clifton, of St. Sylvester's.

The clergyman came forward, black-coated, smooth-shaven, with watchful glances, which seemed ever looking out for that lay co-operation we hear so much of now. Lisle looked over his shoulder, and sprang up to receive him. The visitor tried to get his umbrella and two or three books into the hand which already held his hat, and one little volume fell to the floor. Percival picked it up and smoothed the pages. "Mr. Thorne—Mr. Clifton," said the young organist, as the book was restored to its owner. Percival bowed gravely, and Mr. Clifton did not shake hands, as he would have done if the young man's manner had been less reserved. He was lavish of such greetings. A clergyman might shake hands with any one.

"I'll not detain you long, Lisle," he said. "But I wanted to speak to you about the choir practice to-morrow." And there ensued a little business talk between parson and organist. Judith took up a bit of work, and Percival leant against the chimney-piece. Presently Lisle went back to the piano, and tried over a hymn tune which Mr. Clifton had brought. The clergyman stood solemnly by. "I met Gordon a few minutes ago," he said. "He was with his brother, and some other men of the same stamp. If he mixes himself up with that set, he must go."

"You'll miss him in the choir, Mr. Clifton," said Bertie.

"He must choose between such associates and the choir," the other replied. The words were moderate enough, but the tone was austere.

"Especially at Easter," said Bertie, still playing.

"What of that?" demanded the other. "I would rather have no choir at St. Sylvester's, than have men in it, whose way of life during the week made a mockery of the praises they sang on Sundays."

He spoke in a low voice, and Bertie's playing partially covered the conversation. "Perhaps, Mr. Clifton, if Gordon understood how much you disapproved"—the young organist began.

"Gordon—Gordon—it isn't only Gordon who should understand. Every one should understand my feeling on such a subject, without my having to explain it. But I won't keep you any longer now; it is getting late. Remember, seven o'clock to-morrow evening." And with a polite remark or two to the others, Mr. Clifton bowed himself out, with Bertie in attendance. The procession of two might have been more dignified, if the organist had not made a face at Judith and Percival as he went out at the door, and if he had not danced a fantastic but noiseless dance on the landing, behind the incumbent of St. Sylvester's, who was feeling feebly, in the dim light, for the top step of Mrs. Bryant's staircase.

"Is anything the matter with Mr. Clifton?" Judith asked, when the boy came back and executed another war-dance all round the room. "He didn't seem pleased, I thought."

Bertie brought himself up with a grand flourish opposite the arm-chair, and sank into it. "Bless you, no, there's nothing the matter with him. Tumbled out of bed the wrong side this morning—that's all. He does, sometimes."

"Might have got over that by this time of night, one would think," said Percival, looking at his watch.

"Hold hard—you aren't going yet," exclaimed Bertie, bounding up. "Here, Judith, let's have another song to take the taste of old Clifton out of our mouths. Whatever possessed him to come here to-night?"

They had two or three songs instead of one, and then Percival went off. Judith put her work away, shut up the piano, and laid Bertie's music straight. He stood meanwhile with his back to the dying fire, idly chinking some money which he had taken from his waistcoat pocket, a half-crown and two or three shillings. His brows were drawn down as if he were lost in thought. Presently his half-crown went spinning in the air, he caught it dexterously—heads. Bertie half smiled to himself, as who should say, "Well, if Destiny will have it so, what am I that I should resist it?"

It is very well to toss up, if you have already come to a decision which you cannot quite justify. Should the verdict be adverse, it is no worse than it was before, for, if you have really made up your mind, so trivial an accident will not stop you. It may even be your duty to show that you attach no superstitious importance to it. And, on the other hand, if chance favours you, some of your burden of responsibility is transferred to the shoulders of fate.

So Bertie smiled, pocketed his half-crown, kissed his sister, and went off to his own room, whistling on his way thither with peculiar distinctness and perseverance.

Nearly an hour later, two figures stood by the dim light in the passage, and conversed in whispers.

"Now, my charming Lydia, how about that key?"

"I'll charming Lydia you," was the reply. "I like your impudence!"

"I know you do. You shall have some more when I've time to spare. But now I must really be off. Get me the key, there's a dear girl."

"I can't, then. If you want a latch-key, why don't you go to Ma, and say so like a man! There it is, and you'd have it directly."

"Oh most unreasonable Lydia! How many times must I explain to you that that wouldn't do, because your Ma, while she possesses many of the charms, is not quite exempt from the weakness of her sex—in short, Lydia, she talks."

"Well, what then? If I were a man I wouldn't be afraid of my sister! I'd be my own master——"

"So will I," said Bertie Lisle.

"And I'd say what I meant, right out. I would!"

"If you knew there'd be a fuss, and people anxious about you? Would you?" He yawned. "No—I'll be my own master, but I like to do things quietly."

"I don't care so much about that," said Lydia, whose feelings were less delicate. To struggle openly for an avowed object seemed to her the most natural thing in the world, and she would have preferred her independence to be conspicuous. She did not understand that with men of Bertie's stamp it is not the latch-key itself, but the unsuspected latch-key, which confers the liberty they love.

"Well?" said he. "Am I to stay here all night?"

"That's just what you'd better do. You won't get any good out of that lot, and so I tell you. You'll lose your money, and get into nasty, drinking ways—don't you go there any more!"

"Upon my word, Lydia, you preach as well as old Clifton does."

"And do you just as much good, I daresay."

"Just as much. You've hit it exactly."

"I thought so. You aren't the sort to take any heed. One may preach and preach——"

"How well you understand me! No, as you say, I'm not the sort to get any good from preaching. You are quite right, Lydia, my character requires kindness, sympathy, and a latch-key—especially requires a latch-key."

"Especially requires a fiddlestick," said Lydia, and, disregarding his smiling "Not at all," she went on in an injured tone, "There's Ma worrying over accounts, and likely to worry for the next hour. How am I to get a key from under her very nose?"

Lisle seemed to reflect. "Old Fordham doesn't have one, I suppose?"

"Gracious, no—not he! If you gave him one, he'd drop it as if it was red-hot. He thinks they're wicked."

There was a pause, but, after a few moments, there stole through the silence a sweetly insinuating voice, "Then, Lydia——"

Lydia half turned away, and put up her left shoulder.

"Then, Lydia, I suppose you wouldn't——"

"You'd better keep on supposing I wouldn't."

"Can't suppose such cruelty for more than a moment. Can't really. No, listen to me"—this with a change of voice—"I must go out this evening, upon my soul it's important. I'm in a fix, Lydia. I've not breathed a word to any one else, and wouldn't for worlds, but you'll not let it out, I know. If I'm lucky enough to get out of the scrape to-night, I'll never get into it again, I can tell you."

"You will," said Lydia.

"I swear I won't. And if not——"

"Well—if not?"

"Why I must try another plan to get free. I shan't like it, but I must. But there'll be a row, and I shall have to go away. I'd a good deal rather not."

"What sort of plan?" she asked curiously.

"Desperate!" he answered, and shook his head.

"What is it?" Her eyes were widely opened in excitement and alarm. "You ain't going to be driven to forge something, like people in novels? Or—or—it isn't a big robbery, is it? Oh you wouldn't!"

The face opposite looked so smiling, and candid, and innocent, that it made the words she had hazarded an obvious absurdity, even to herself, as soon as she had uttered them.

"Why not a murder?" said Lisle. "I think it shall be a murder. Upon my word, you're complimentary! No, no, I don't mean to try my hand at any of them." She smiled, relieved. "But I must go out to-night. Lydia, will you let me in once more?"

"Once more? You won't ask again?"

"Never again."

There was a pause. "Didn't you say that last time?"

"Lydia, you are the unkindest girl!"

"Well then, I will."

"No, you are the kindest."

"Just this once more. Mind you tap very gently, and I'll be awake. But do be careful. It frightens me so."

When the house was full of lodgers the Bryants stowed themselves away in any odd corners. At this time Lydia occupied a large cupboard—by courtesy called a small room—close to their stuffy little back parlour. Lisle would go to the yard behind the house, which was common to two or three besides No. 13, and with one foot on a projecting bit of brick-work could get his hand on the sill, and make his signal.

"Some day the police'll take you for a burglar," said Lydia, encouragingly. "Well, go and enjoy yourself."

"It is a shame to keep you up so long, isn't it? What do you do all the time, eh, Lydia?"

"Sit in the dark, mostly, and think what a fool I'm making of myself."

"Don't do that. Think how good you are to a poor fellow in trouble. That will be better—won't it? But I must be off—good-by, you kind Lydia."

He stooped forward and kissed her, taking her hands in his. He found it convenient to pay his debt in this coin, his creditor being passably pretty. Not that Bertie had any taste for indiscriminate kissing. Had he had five thousand a year, and had Lydia rendered him a service, he would have recompensed her with some of his superfluous gold. But as he only had his salary as organist, and what he could make by giving music lessons, he paid her with kisses instead. He had no particular objection, and was it not his duty to be economical, for Judith's sake as well as his own?

"Go along with you!" said Lydia, and the young man, who had achieved his purpose, and had no reason for prolonging the interview,

stole laughingly downstairs, waving a farewell as he vanished round the corner. Lydia stood as if she were rooted to the ground, listening intently. She heard the door opened, very gently, and closed with infinite precautions. She still stood till she had counted a hundred under her breath, and then, judging that Mrs. Bryant had not been disturbed by his stealthy exit, she went down to fasten it. She was prepared with an answer if she should be caught in the act, but she was glad to get away undetected, for an excuse, which is perfectly satisfactory at the time, may be very unsatisfactory indeed, when viewed by the light of later events. So Lydia rejoiced when she found herself safe in her own room, though she pursued her usual train of meditation in that refuge. She appraised Lisle's gratitude and kisses pretty accurately, and was angry with herself that she should care to have them, knowing that they were worthless. Yet, as she sat there, she said his name to herself, "Bertie," as she had heard his sister call him. And she knew well that it was pleasant to her to be thrilled by Bertie's eyes and lips, pleasant to feel Bertie's soft palms and slim strong fingers pressing those hands of hers, on which she had just been trying experiments with a new wash. Lydia looked thoughtfully into her looking-glass, and took her reflection into her confidence. "Ain't you a silly?" she said to the phantom which fingered its long curl and silently moved its lips. "Oh you are!" said the girl, "and there's no denying it." She shook her head, and her *vis-à-vis* shook its head in the dim dusk, as much as to say, "No more a fool than you are yourself, Lydia." "Nobody could be," said Lydia moodily.

She did not deem it prudent to keep her light burning very late, and she had a long vigil before the signal came, the three soft taps at her window. She was prepared for it. Every sound had grown painfully distinct to her anxious ears, and she had been almost certain that she knew Lisle's hurried yet stealthy step, as he turned into the yard. She crept to the door and opened it, her practised hand recognising the fastenings in the dark. The light from the street lamp just outside fell on Bertie's white face. "What luck?" she asked in a whisper.

"Curse the luck!" he answered; "everything went against me from first to last."

"I told you so," she whispered, closing the door. "Didn't I say that—"

"Don't—there's a good girl," said Bertie softly, somewhere in the shadows.

Lydia was silent, and shot the bolts very skilfully. But the key made a little grating noise as she turned it, and the two stood for a moment holding their breath. "All right," said Lisle after a pause.

"It's late," said Lydia. He could not deny it. "You must take your boots off before you go up," she continued. "And do be careful."

He obeyed. "Good-night," he whispered. "You'll see that girl calls me in good time to-morrow? I feel as if I should sleep for a century or so." He yawned wearily, "I wish I could!"

"I ain't to be sleepy I suppose—why should I be?" she answered, but added hurriedly, "No, no, you shall be called all right."

"You good girl," whispered Lisle, and he went noiselessly away. A dim gaslight burned half-way up the stairs and guided him to his room. He had only to softly open and close his door and all was well. Judith had not been awakened by the cat-like steps of the man who was not old Fordham. She had fallen asleep very happily, with a vague sense of hopefulness and well-being. She had no idea that Bertie had just flung himself on his bed to snatch a little rest, with a trouble on his mind, which, had she known it, would have effectually banished sleep from her eyes; and a hope of escape, which would have nearly broken her heart. Her burden had been laid aside for a few hours, and through her dreams there ran a golden thread of melody, the unconscious remembrance of that evening's songs and music.

CHAPTER XL.

BERTIE AT THE ORGAN.

BERTIE was duly called, and came down the next morning, punctually enough, but somewhat weary and pale. A slight headache was supposed to account for his looks. Lydia complained of the same thing over her breakfast of bacon downstairs. But Fate was partial, for Bertie's marble pallor and the faint shadow beneath his eyes were utterly unlike poor Lydia's dull complexion, and heavy, red-rimmed eyelids. She was conscious of this injustice, and felt in a dim way that she had proved herself capable of one of those acts of self-devotion, which are the more admirable that they are sure not to be admired. But the longer she thought of it, the more she felt that this noble deed was not one to be repeated. One must set bounds to one's heroism. "I can't go on losing my beauty sleep in this fashion," said Lydia to herself. "I do look such a horrid fright the next day."

When Judith had gone to Standon Square Bertie yawned, stretched himself, got out his little writing-case, and sat down to write a letter. He spent some time over it, erasing and interlining, balancing himself on two legs of his chair, while he looked for stray words on the ceiling, or murmured occasional sentences to judge of the effect. At last it was finished, and, being copied in a dashing hand, looked very spontaneous indeed. "I think that ought to do it," he said to himself, as he smoked his pipe, glancing over the pages. "I think it *will* do it." He smiled in the pride of triumphant authorship, but presently there came a line between his brows, and a puzzled expression to his face. "I'll be shot if I know how it is to be managed afterwards. People do it—but how? I wonder if Thorne knows. If law is at all catching, a year of that musty office must have given him a touch of it." Lisle considered the matter

for a few minutes, and then shrugged his shoulders. "It won't do, I'm afraid. I daren't try him. I'm never quite clear how much he sees and understands, nor what he would do. And Gordon?—no." There was another reverie. Finally he arose, knocked the ashes out of his pipe, and stretched himself once more. "I've got to depend on myself, it seems to me. I must set my wits to work and astonish them all. But oh, if yawning were but a lucrative employment, how easily I could make money, and be quit of the whole affair!"

Bertie took a great interest in his personal appearance, and was frank and unaffected in his consciousness of his good looks. He caught a glimpse of his reflection in the bottle-green mirror, and stopped short in considerable anxiety. "Brain-work and these late hours don't suit me," he said. "Good heavens! I look quite careworn! Well, it may pass for the effect of a gradually breaking heart—why not?"

A glance at his watch roused him to sudden activity. He carefully burnt every scrap of his original manuscript, feeling sure that Lydia would read his letter if she had the chance. He looked leniently on this little weakness of hers. "Very happy to afford you what little amusement I can in the general way," he soliloquised, as he directed an envelope; "but I really can't allow you to read this letter, Lydia, my dear." Apparently he was in a distrustful mood, for after hesitating a moment he got some wax, and sealed it with a ring he wore. Then, putting it carefully in his pocket, he tossed a few sheets of blotted music paper on the table, left his writing-case wide open, took his hat and a roll of music, and went out in the direction of St. Sylvester's, trying to work out his problem as he walked. He was not, however, so deep in thought that he had no eyes for the passers-by, and his attention was suddenly attracted by a servant-girl dawdling along the opposite pavement. He watched her keenly, but furtively, as if to make quite sure, and when she turned down a side street, he followed, and speedily overtook her.

"This is lucky!" he ejaculated. "I didn't expect to see you, Susan. What are you doing here?"

She was a slight, plain girl, with a fairly intelligent face, whose expression was doubtful. Sometimes it showed a willingness to please, oftener it was sullen, now and then merely thoughtful. Just at this moment, as she looked up at the young organist, it was crafty and greedy. "I'm taking a note," she said. "Miss Crawford's always a sending me with notes or something."

"You don't mind being sent with notes, do you?" said Bertie, blandly.

"That's as may be," the girl answered.

"I should have thought it was pleasant work. At any rate, it's as easy to take two as one, isn't it?"

"I have to take 'em 'cause I'm paid to, you see—easy or not."

"Oh, of course, you ought to be paid." His fingers were in his

waistcoat pocket, and some coins that chinked agreeably were transferred to her hand, together with the sealed letter. "You've saved me a walk to Standon Square," he said.

The girl laughed, looking down at her money. "It wouldn't have hurt you, I dare say. You oughtn't to make much of a walk there. How about an answer?"

"Oh, I shall get an answer when I come to-morrow." He nodded a careless farewell, and went a little out of his way to avoid Gordon's brother, who was visible in the distance.

Susan turned the missive over in her hand. "It's sealed tight enough," she remarked to herself. "What did he want to do that for?" She eyed it discontentedly. "I hate such suspicious ways. Wouldn't there be a flare-up if I just handed it over to the old maid! I won't, though, for she's give me warning, and he's a deal more free with his money than she'd ever be—stingy old cat! But wouldn't there be a flare-up! My!" And Susan, who had an ungratified taste for the sensational, looked at the address and smiled to think of the power she possessed.

Before she slipped the letter into her pocket she sniffed doubtfully at the envelope, and tossed her head in scorn. "I thought so! Smells of tobacco!" It was true, for Lisle, as we know, had smoked while he revised his composition. "If I were a young man going a courting, I'd scent my letters with rose or something nice, and I'd write 'em on pink paper—I would!" Susan reflected. But Lisle was wiser. There is no perfume, for a young ladies' school, like a whiff of cigar smoke. To that prim, half convent-like seclusion, where manners are being formed, and the proprieties are strictly observed, it comes as a pleasant suggestion of something worldly and masculine, just a little wicked, and altogether delightful.

So Lisle went on his way to St. Sylvester's, lighter of heart for having met Susan, and got rid of the letter. While it was still in his pocket nothing was absolutely settled, in spite of that half-crown which had represented inexorable destiny the night before. But now that it was gone, further thought about it was happily unnecessary, and honour forbade him to draw back. It was true, however, that he was still face to face with the difficulty which had been in his mind when he met his messenger so conveniently.

He caught a street Arab, and promised him twopence, if he would come and blow for him while he practised. But he began by playing absently and carelessly, for, since the letter had been despatched, his problem had become infinitely more urgent, and it thrust itself between him and the music. His fingers roved dreamily over the keys, his eyes wandered, as if in spite of himself, to the east end of the church. All at once he came out with an impatient "How *do* people manage it?" and he finished the muttered question with a strong word, and a big chord.

A moment more, and his face is illuminated with the inward light of a sudden idea. He lets his hands lie where they happened to be, he sits there with parted lips and startled eyes. The idea is almost too wonderful, too simple, too obvious, and yet—"By Jove!" says Bertie, under his breath.

His street Arab means to earn his twopence, and in spite of the silence he pumps away in a cheerful and conscientious manner, till he shall be bidden to stop. The organ protests, in a long and dolorous note, and startles the musician from his reverie. Forthwith he begins to play a stirring march, and the rejoicing chords arise, and rush, and crowd beneath his fingers. Has he indeed found the solution of his great perplexity? Apparently he thinks so. He seems absolutely hurried along in triumph on these waves of jubilant harmony. A ray of pale March sunlight falls on his forehead and shines on his hair, as he tosses his head in the quickening excitement of the moment. His headache is gone, his weariness is gone. The notes seem to gather like bands of armed men, and rush victoriously through the aisles. But, even as he plays, he laughs to himself, a boyish happy laugh, for this great idea which is to help him out of all his difficulties is not only a great idea, but a great joke. And the march rings louder yet, for, with every note he plays, his thought grows clearer to his mind, plainer and more feasible. There is a gay audacity about the laugh which lingers in Bertie's eyes, and on his lips, as if Dan Cupid himself had just been there, whispering some choice scheme of roguish knavery, some artful artlessness, into the young man's ear. Bertie does not acknowledge that his inspiration has come in such a questionable fashion. He says to himself, "It will do, I feel it will do—isn't it providential! Just when I was in despair!" This is a more suitable sentiment for an organist, no doubt, for what possible business can Dan Cupid have at St. Sylvester's? Louder and louder yet pours the great stream of music, and that is a joke too, for Lisle feels as if he were shouting his secret to the four winds, and yet keeping it locked in his inmost soul, taking the passers-by into his confidence in the most open-hearted fashion, and laughing at them in his sleeve. But the musician is exhausted at last, and the end comes with a thundering crash of chords.

"Here, boy, here's sixpence for you; you may be off. We've done enough for to-day, and may go home to Bellevue Street." But it seems to Bertie Lisle, as he picks up his roll of music and comes down the aisle, that Bellevue Street too is only a joke now.

CHAPTER XLI.

WHERE THERE'S A WILL THERE'S A WAY.

APRIL had come, and the best of the year was beginning with a yellow dawn of daffodils. The trees stood stern and wintry, but there were little leaves on the honeysuckles and the hawthorn hedges, glad outbursts of song among the branches, and soft, shy caresses in the air. Sissy Langton, riding into Fordborough, was delicately beautiful as spring itself. She missed her squire of an earlier April, and his absence made an underlying sadness in her radiant eyes, which had the April charm. That day her glance and smile had an especial brightness, partly because spring had come, and, though countless springs have passed away, each comes with the old yet ever fresh assurance that it will make all things new. Partly because it was her birthday, and, while we are yet young, there is a certain joy of royalty which marks our birthday mornings. But most of all because that day gave her the power to satisfy a desire which had lain hidden in her heart through the long winter months.

It was the Fordborough market-day, and already, though it was but eleven o'clock, the little town was waking up. Sissy, followed by Mrs. Middleton's staid servant, rode straight to the principal street, and stopped at Mr. Hardwicke's office. Young Hardwicke, reading the paper in his room, was surprised when a clerk announced that Miss Langton was at the door, asking for his father. He forgot the sporting intelligence in an instant. "Well, isn't my father in?"

No, Mr. Hardwicke went out about twenty minutes earlier, and did not say when he should be back. They had told Miss Langton, and she said, "Perhaps Mr. Henry——"

Mr. Henry was off like a shot. He found Sissy on her horse at the door, looking pensively along the street, as if she were studying the effect of dusky red on palest blue—chimney-pots against the April sky.

"So Mr. Hardwicke is out?" she said, when they had shaken hands. "I'm so sorry. I wanted him so particularly."

"Is it important? Are you in a great hurry?" said Henry. "He won't be long, or he would certainly have left word, on a market-day especially. Could you come in and wait a little while?" he suggested. "I suppose I shouldn't do as well?"

"I don't know," said Sissy, looking a little doubtfully at the tall fresh-coloured young fellow, who smiled frankly in reply.

"Oh, it isn't at all likely," said Mr. Henry, with delightful candour. "The governor can't, for the life of him, understand how I make so many blunders. I've a special talent that way, I suppose, but I don't know how I came by it."

"Then perhaps it had better be Mr. Hardwicke. If it were a waltz, now——" and she laughed. "But it isn't a waltz, it is something very important. Do you know anything about wills?"

He looked up in sudden apprehension. "Is it about a will? Mrs. Middleton's? Is anything the matter?"

"No; it isn't Aunt Middleton's. It's mine," was the composed reply. But seeing relief, and almost amusement, on his face, she added hastily, "I *can* make a will, can't I? I'm twenty-one, you know. It's my birthday to-day."

"Then I wish you many happy returns of the day."

"Thank you; but can I make my will?"

"Of course you can make a will."

"A will that will be good," Sissy insisted, still speaking in the low tone she had adopted when she began to explain the object of her visit. "Can I make it here and now?"

"Not on horseback, I think," said Hardwicke, with a smile. "You would be tired of sitting here while we took down all your instructions. It isn't very quick work making ladies' wills. They generally leave no end of legacies. I suppose they are so good, they don't forget anybody."

"Mine won't be like that. Mine will be very short," Sissy said. "And I suppose I am not good, for I shall forget almost everybody in it." She laughed as she said it, yet something in her voice struck Hardwicke as curiously earnest. "I will come in, I think, and tell you about it," she went on. "I want to make it to-day."

"To-day!" he repeated, as he helped her to dismount.

"Yes. I'll tell you," said Sissy, entering his room, "and you'll tell Mr. Hardwicke, won't you? I'll get the Elliots to give me some luncheon, and then I can come here again between two and three. I shall have to sign it, or something, shan't I? Do tell your father I want it all to be finished to-day."

"I'll tell him."

"Tell him it's my birthday, so of course I must do just as I please, and have everything I want, to-day. I don't know whether that's the law, but I'm sure it ought to be."

"Of course it ought to be," Henry replied, with fervour. "And I think I can undertake to say that it shall be our law, anyhow."

"Thank you," said Sissy. "I shall be so very glad. And it can't take long. I only want him to say that I wish all that I have to go to Percival Thorne."

"To Percival," Hardwicke repeated, with a sensation as if she had suddenly stabbed him. "To Percival Thorne. Yes. Is that all I am to say?"

"That's all. I want it all to be for Percival Thorne, to do just what he likes with it. That can't take long, surely."

Hardwicke bit the end of a penholder that he had picked up, and looked uneasily at her. "You're awfully anxious to get this done, Miss Langton—you aren't ill, are you?"

"Oh, I'm well enough, much better than I was last year," said Sissy,

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"Of course you can make a will."

"A will that will be good," Sissy insisted, still speaking in the low tone she had adopted when she began to explain the object of her visit. "Can I make it here and now?"

"Not on horseback, I think," said Hardwicke, with a smile. "You would be tired of sitting here while we took down all your instructions. It isn't very quick work making ladies' wills. They generally leave no end of legacies. I suppose they are so good, they don't forget anybody."

"Mine won't be like that. Mine will be very short," Sissy said. "And I suppose I am not good, for I shall forget almost everybody in it." She laughed as she said it, yet something in her voice struck Hardwicke as curiously earnest. "I will come in, I think, and tell you about it," she went on. "I want to make it to-day."

"To-day!" he repeated, as he helped her to dismount.

"Yes. I'll tell you," said Sissy, entering his room, "and you'll tell Mr. Hardwicke, won't you? I'll get the Elliots to give me some luncheon, and then I can come here again between two and three. I shall have to sign it, or something, shan't I? Do tell your father I want it all to be finished to-day."

"I'll tell him."

"Tell him it's my birthday, so of course I must do just as I please, and have everything I want, to-day. I don't know whether that's the law, but I'm sure it ought to be."

"Of course it ought to be," Henry replied, with fervour. "And I think I can undertake to say that it shall be our law, anyhow."

"Thank you," said Sissy. "I shall be so very glad. And it can't take long. I only want him to say that I wish all that I have to go to Percival Thorne."

"To Percival," Hardwicke repeated, with a sensation as if she had suddenly stabbed him. "To Percival Thorne. Yes. Is that all I am to say?"

"That's all. I want it all to be for Percival Thorne, to do just what he likes with it. That can't take long, surely."

Hardwicke bit the end of a penholder that he had picked up, and looked uneasily at her. "You're awfully anxious to get this done, Miss Langton—you aren't ill, are you?"

"Oh, I'm well enough, much better than I was last year," said Sissy,

lightly. "But there's no good in putting things of this sort off, you know"—she dropped her voice—"as poor Mr. Thorne did. And your father said once, that if I didn't make a will when I came of age, my money would all go to Sir Charles Langton. He doesn't really want any more, I should think, for they say he is very rich. And he is only a second cousin of mine, and I have never seen him. It's funny, having so few relations, isn't it?"

"Very," said Hardwicke.

"And some people have such a lot," said Sissy, thoughtfully. "But I always feel as if the Thornes were my relations."

"I suppose so. At any rate, I don't see that Sir Charles Langton has any claim upon you." There was silence for a minute, Sissy drawing an imaginary outline on Hardwicke's carpet with her riding-whip, he following her every movement with his eyes.

"I shall have to sign both my Christian names, I suppose?" she said, abruptly.

"Have you two? I didn't know. What is the other?"

"Jane."

"Jane—I like that," said Henry. "Yes, sign them both."

"Thank you. I don't want to seem like an idiot to your father. I should like it best if I could just write 'Sissy,' and nothing else, as I do at the end of my letters. When I see 'Cecilia Jane Langton,' I feel inclined to call out, 'This is none of I!' like the old woman."

She stood up to go. "You won't forget, will you?"

"No, I won't forget."

"Everything to Percival Thorne."

"Percival Thorne is an uncommonly lucky fellow," said the young man, looking down.

Sissy stopped short, glanced at him, and coloured. In her anxiety she had never considered the light in which the bequest might strike Henry Hardwicke. In fact, she had not thought of him at all, except as a messenger. She was accustomed to take him for granted on any occasion. She had known him all her life, and he was always, in her eyes, the big friendly boy, with whom she pulled crackers, and played blindman's buff, at children's parties. She dreamed of no possible romance with Henry, and did not imagine that he could have such a dream about her. He was as harmless as a brother, without a brother's right to question and criticise. It was precisely that feeling which had been at the root of the friendliness which the Fordborough gossips took for a flirtation. They could not have been more utterly mistaken. She liked Henry Hardwicke; she knew that he was honest, and honourable, and good; but if any one had said that he was a worthy young man, I believe she would have assented. And that is the last adjective which a girl would apply to her ideal.

Sissy's scheme had been in her mind through all the winter, but she had always imagined herself stating her intentions, in a business-like

way, to old Mr. Hardwicke, who was a friend of the family. She had been so thunderstruck when she found that he was out, that she had taken Henry into her confidence at a moment's warning. She dared not risk any delay. It would be impossible to go home, leaving Percival's future insecure. Suppose she died that night—and she was struck with the fantastic coincidence of Mr. Hardwicke's second absence at the critical moment—suppose she felt herself dying, and knew that the only thing she could have done for Percival was left undone! She could not face the possibility of that agony. Indeed she wondered how she had lived through the long hours which had elapsed, since the clock struck twelve, and the day began which made her twenty-one; not the girl Sissy any longer, but the woman who held Percival's fortune in her hands. How could she have gone away with her purpose unfulfilled?

When Henry said "Percival Thorne is an uncommonly lucky fellow," she coloured, but only that transient flush betrayed her, for she answered readily.

"Why, Mr. Hardwicke, what a dreadful thing to say to me! I hope you don't have second sight, or anything horrible of that sort?"

"Second sight," Henry repeated doubtfully, looking down at a little dangling eyeglass, "what's that?"

"Oh, you must know! Isn't it second sight when you can tell if people are going to die? You see them in their winding-sheets, and they are low down if it will only be rather soon. But if it is to be quite directly, their shrouds are wrapped round them, high up. What was mine like, that you said Percival Thorne was so lucky? Up to here!" And, standing before him, she smiled, and touched her chin.

"God forbid!" said Henry. "How can you say such fearful things?"

"Oh! you didn't see it then? I'm very glad."

"Good heavens—no! And I don't believe it. I didn't mean that Thorne would be lucky if you *died*!"

"I can't do him any good any other way," said Sissy, with sweet composure; "but I don't think I'm going to die, so I don't suppose I shall do him any good at all. Do you think this is a strange fancy of mine? The truth is, Aunt Middleton and I have been unhappy about Percival ever since last May, because we know his grandfather meant to have done something for him. He isn't rich, and he ought to have had Brackenhill, so I should like him to have my money if I die. It is only a chance, because I daresay I may live fifty years or so—only fancy!—but I would rather Percival had the chance than Sir Charles. That's all. You'll explain it to your father? It can't do any harm, if it does no good."

"Oh, no; I see. It can't do any harm."

"And now I'll be off," laughed Sissy. "How dreadfully I have

made you waste your time! I daresay if I hadn't been here, you would have written ever so many things on parchment, and tied them up with red tape."

"Oh yes, quantities!" Hardwicke replied, as he escorted her to the door. "A cart-load at least. I'm glad you think I'm so industrious."

Standing outside, he said something about her horse. He did not like Firefly's look, and he told her so. Moreover he threatened to tell Mrs. Middleton his bad opinion of Sissy's favourite.

"Nonsense!" she answered, lightly. "There's nothing to be afraid of." But suddenly she turned and looked at him. "Don't you really think Firefly is safe?" she said. "Well, I must see about it. William, I'm not going back now, and I think I'll walk to Mrs. Elliott's. You had better meet me here at half-past two."

And with a parting glance at Hardwicke, she went away down the sunshiny street, and he stood looking after her. He would have liked to be her escort to the Elliotts' house, but he had her message to deliver to his father, and he knew she would not permit it. Besides, to tell the truth, she had taken him by surprise, and gone away before he thought of anything of the kind. So he could only stand bareheaded on the office steps, watching her as she went on her way. But suddenly his lips parted to let out a word, which certainly would not have escaped him had he been by Sissy's side.

"There's that Fothergill fellow!" said Henry, recognising the Captain's slim figure, and black moustache. And he turned on his heel and went in.

He was quite right. It was Fothergill who came sauntering along the pavement, looking at the shop windows, at the passers-by, at the preparations for the market, with quick eyes and an interest which conveyed the impression of his superiority to it all, better than any affectation of languid indifference. His glances seemed to say, "And this is a country town—a market—these are farmers—people live here all their lives!" But when he saw Sissy Langton he came forward eagerly. And perhaps it was just as well that he was at hand to be her squire through the busy little street, for the girl was seized with a new and unaccountable nervousness. A bit of orange-peel, lying in the road, caused her a sudden tremor. Two or three meek and wondering cows, which gazed vacantly round in search of their familiar pasture, appeared to her as a herd of savage brutes. She looked distrustfully up and down the road, and waited at the pavement's edge for a donkey-cart to pass, before she dared attempt a crossing. It was just at this moment that the Captain appeared, quickening his pace, and lifting his hat; only too ready to guard her through all the perils of a Fordborough market-day.

Henry Hardwicke hated reading, and had no particular love for the law. His father said he was a fool, and was inordinately fond of him,

nevertheless. It might be that the old lawyer was right on both points. And, dull as Henry was supposed to be, he was capable of delicate feelings and perceptions, as far as Sissy Langton was concerned. It seemed to him that accident had revealed to him a hidden wound in her heart; and the revelation pained him, not selfishly, for he had never hoped for himself, but because of the secret suffering which it implied. His one idea was to do her bidding, yet not betray her. He delivered her message to his father, with a tact of which he was himself unconscious. On his lips it became no less urgent, but he dwelt especially on Sissy's desire to see justice done to the man who had been accidentally disinherited; on her feeling that she owed more to the Thornes, whose home and love she had shared, than to the Langtons, with whom she shared nothing but a name; and on her impatience of even an hour's delay, because the Squire's sudden death had made a deep impression on her mind.

All this, translated into Harry's blunt and simple speech, was intelligible enough to Mr. Hardwicke. The girlish whim that all should be done on her birthday made him smile; but the remembrance of Godfrey Thorne was present in his mind as in hers. He did not attach much importance to the whole affair, and felt that he should not be overwhelmed with surprise should he hear a few months later that Sissy was going to be married to some one else, and wanted to make some compromise—perhaps to resign the Squire's legacy to Percival. To his eyes it looked more like an attempt at restitution than anything else. "She is sorry for him, poor fellow," thought Hardwicke. "She did not know her own mind, and now she would like to atone to him somehow."

Sissy came back, alone, at the time she had fixed, looking white and anxious. A client came out as she arrived, and five farmers were waiting in the office to see Mr. Hardwicke; therefore, though she was ushered in at once, the interview was brief. The old lawyer paid her a smiling compliment on her promptitude. "We have to advise people to make their wills sometimes," he said, "but you are beforehand with us." Sissy expressed a fear that she had troubled him on a very busy day, and he assured her that, to blame her, because her twenty-first birthday happened to fall on a Friday, would be the last thing he should think of doing. Then the girl looked up at him, and said that old Mr. Thorne had always been so good to her, and she thought that perhaps, if he could see, he would be glad—so she could not put it off—she stopped abruptly, and her eyes filled. Mr. Hardwicke bent his head in silent acquiescence; the brief document was duly signed and witnessed; and Sissy went away, riding home as if she had never known what fear meant. Suppose Firefly threw her, what then? She had been to Mr. Hardwicke, and though her "Cecilia Jane Langton" was not all she could have wished, because she was nervous, and Mr. Hardwicke's pen was so scratchy, still there it was. And was not the paper, thus signed, a talisman against all dread of death?

So her burden was lighter. But what could lighten the other load which lay on her heart? She hardly knew whether it were love or fear that she felt for Percival. The long days which had passed since she saw him, had only deepened the impression of that summer evening when they parted. His reply to her entreaty that he would come back to her had been exactly what she had feared—as gentle as he himself had been when they stood face to face in the old drawing-room at Brackenhill, and as inflexible. If she could forget him—if she could learn to care for Walter Latimer or Captain Fothergill—what a bright, easy, sunshiny life might yet be hers! No—ten thousand times, No! Better to suffer the weariness of dread, and doubt, and longing for Percival.

But Percival would have been astonished if he could have seen the darkly heroic guise in which he reigned over Sissy Langton's dreams.

